

832
522

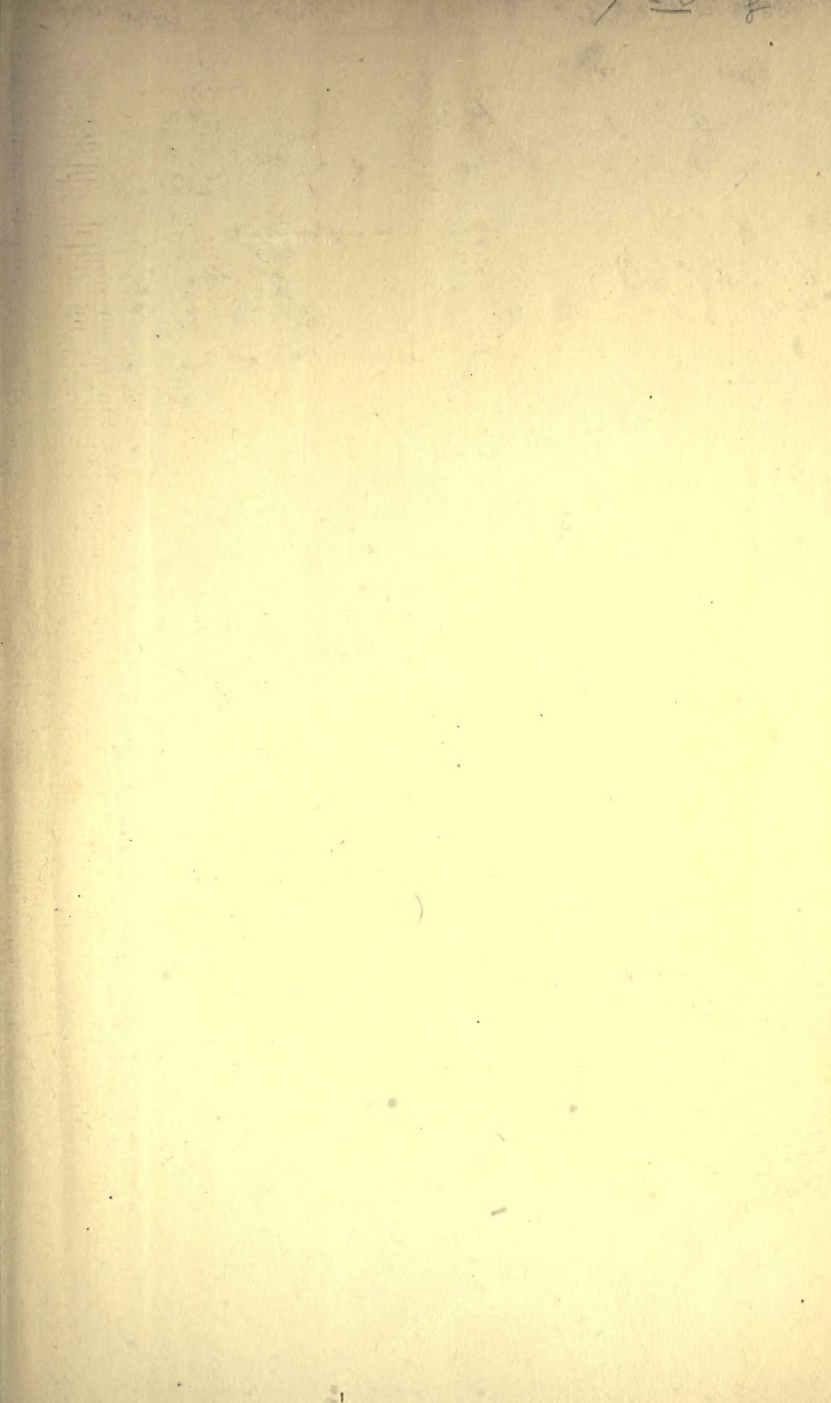
SAINTE SÉDUCTRE



Presented to the
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
LIBRARY

by the
ONTARIO LEGISLATIVE
LIBRARY

1980





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

SAINTE SÉDUCTRE

40855

SAINTE SÉDUCTRE

Isolator
E

An Inner View of the Boche at Bay.

BY
EXILE X.

"The bravest of these peoples are the Belgians . . . because
there is nothing between them and the Germans but the Rhine."

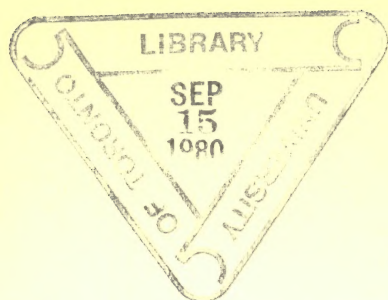
—CÆSAR'S COMMENTARIES

AMERICAN EDITION

REVISED AND EDITED BY
RICHARD WILMER ROWAN

NEW YORK
LIBERTY PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
1917

Isolator
E

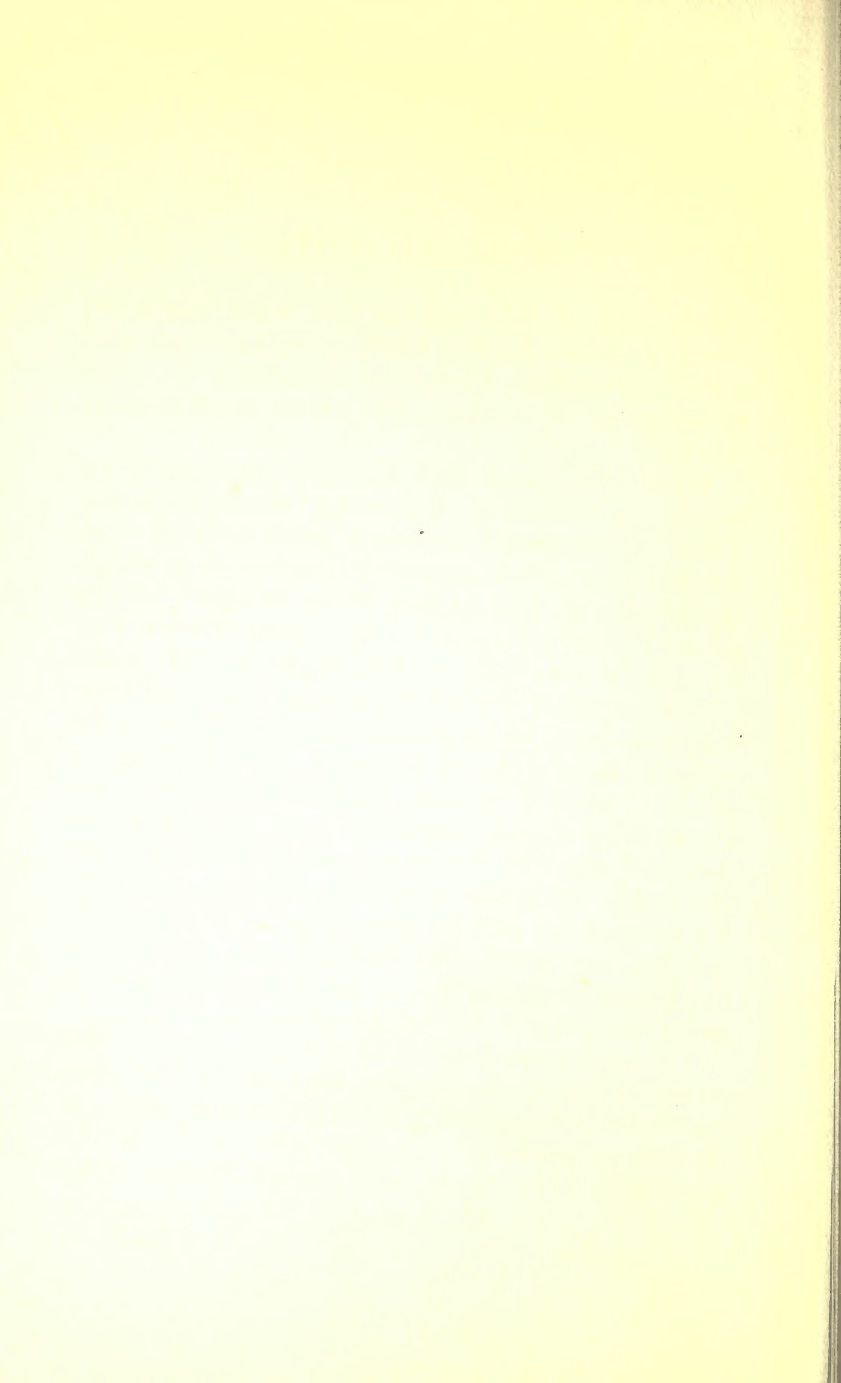


Copyright, 1917, by
LIBERTY PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION

*All rights reserved, including translation
and public presentation*

D
526
02
82

TO THE FIRST LINE OF BATTLE,
THE UNDECORATED "LEGION OF HONOR"
WHO DIED UNVICTORIOUS
THAT MIGHTIER FORCES MIGHT GATHER AND PREPARE
FOR THE SALVATION OF DEMOCRACY,
THE AMERICAN EDITION
OF THIS BOOK IS
DEDICATED



EDITORIAL NOTE

THE text of this edition has been freely revised to secure for it a fluency, naturalness, and colloquial reality likely to commend its vital message to the closer attention of American readers.

With this same end in view the prefatory pages immediately following were included. They represent an attempt—and one of such length that some editorial explanation seems necessary—to accomplish three things: (a) To prepare a sound basis for the point of view certain to be acquired by the reader of this vivid presentation of conditions within Imperial Germany to-day; (b) to address specifically to public opinion in the United States the warning so subtly sounded by the author throughout his intensely gripping narrative; and (c) to crystallize and amplify the most astounding and the distinctly American elements of that warning. To present an introductory digest, of course, is not the intention, the author's manner of arraignment being infinitely more compelling than any mere prosaic recitation of alarm.

To emphasize further this cardinal appeal to America recognized in the text, there has been carefully eliminated all foreign words and exclamatory phrases. The exception is *Boche*, for among our British as well as our French allies

EDITORIAL NOTE

this nickname has distinctly "arrived." Lurid sections of the Northcliffe press have put forward the endearment of *Hun* to replace it; but, internationally speaking, a German is now and will be throughout this generation of soldiers only a *Boche*. As pronounced by the western armies a more opprobrious substitute need not be sought.

SAINTE SÉDUCTRE



INTRODUCTORY

AT THE very outset of the War a finger-post was set up by the German authorities pointing out to the world exactly what grade of Prussianized conduct might be expected. Beside the grim shadows of the countless German military "necessities" since that fateful August of 1914, this initial act stands as a mere churlish trifle, an unmannerly jest perhaps, a swinish rudeness before the baring of the tusks that proclaim the wild boar.

It is related that no more undesirable diplomat ever had been accredited to Paris than Baron von Schoen, the Imperial German Ambassador. His official departure was a single welcome incident in those brave, tear-stained days of mobilization. Yet with a characteristic politeness the Foreign Office of the Quai d'Orsay exerted itself most particularly on behalf of the German envoy. Von Schoen was provided with a train *de grand luxe*, lacking in no convenient detail, and given a clear track despite the congestion of military preparation. Von Schoen, representative of an Emperor, left his post like an Emperor and proceeded in state to the Lorraine frontier. Not only in perfect safety, as required by international usage, but with notable promptness and with the further marked attention of a luxury unwarranted and unmerited, the French Govern-

INTRODUCTORY

ment restored this unpopular guest to his native Germany—in characteristic acknowledgement of which courtesy the Imperial German Government detained the French train *de luxe* as a prize of war.

§ 2

“The Prussian is conceived cruel,” said Goethe. “Civilization has made him ferocious.” And Goethe’s “Civilization” was hopelessly old-fashioned, mild—and *inefficient*. In it gas attacks, submarines, and Zeppelins were not even prospects. Can it really be that the Dark Ages earn their adjective because of the then unenlightened public state regarding the possibilities of gunpowder? Must the world’s progress always lead to the abyss? Goethe deplored the ferocities of his *civilized* age—and now we find more men killed and wounded in one day of fighting than were engaged on both sides in the celebrated battles of Jena or Wagram.

However, the progressively terrible achievements of human conflict may not be held responsible for this present world-disaster, with its forty billions already spent to cause such desolation as twice that incredible sum will not retrieve. It would be as unreasonable to hold responsible the first Elector of Brandenburg for the succession of progressively undesirable Hohenzollerns which his capable leadership set up ambitiously in the midst of a luckless Europe. The utter failure of the Hohenzollern dynasty is due entirely to an Idea—the Idea *Kolossal*—the Deified National Ego. The present devastating misapplication of human energy is due to the same Idea.

INTRODUCTORY

This mental monstrosity is variously expressed, having nearly as many symbols and ramifications as it now has victims. It includes, of course, the monumental hoax about a "Superman," Super-nationality being, in fact, its epitome. In its Profession of Faith there is much juggling with "Efficiency"—"Expediency"—"Weltpolitik." "From Hamburg to the Persian Gulf" has been its favorite challenge. When Kaiser Wilhelm was considerate enough to remind his troops: "You think each day of your Emperor. Do not forget God."—the Idea Kolossal was gnawing him cruelly.

But for this maladroit jewelry which puts the time-worn and tarnished gem of despotic power into a setting of ultra-modern mechanical organization, the world's output of gunpowder might still be largely devoted to blasting for the foundations of universities and hospitals and similar needful enterprises—with perhaps a rational fragment of those forty billions of war debt for their endowment. Without the Idea Kolossal the collapse at Potsdam—inevitable in the forward march of Democracy—would have been evolutionary, political, and domestic instead of revolutionary, organic, and of the utmost international necessity.

The Idea—the Deified National Ego—is produced by a simple intellectual contortion. The Kaiser has explained himself to his army as follows:

Remember that the German people are the chosen of God. On me, as German Emperor, the spirit of God has



INTRODUCTORY

descended. I am his weapon, his sword, his Vicegerent. Woe to the disobedient! Death to cowards and unbelievers.

Thus, the simple contortion:

(a) The German Emperor is the foremost of Germans, God's chosen people.

(b) The German Emperor as God's lieutenant, his Vicegerent (by his own confession), is veritably God's Heir on Earth.

(c) Hence, *all* Germans must partake of this essential superiority cumulative in their foremost representative, the Emperor.

All Germans are, therefore, partly deified and unquestionably superior to all others not related to God's Vicegerent by race or obedience. If one is sufficiently careful about distorting his premises almost any conclusion may be reached. To a man who stands on his head long enough even the midday sun is darkened.

With the Idea finally resolved and firmly implanted, the Germans become the most dangerous people in the world. Under such a governmental philosophy the present war of attempted conquest was not only inevitable—being the establishment of this sub-divinely revealed superiority—but the very brutality of the Idea's manifestation in the German conductment of the war was also just as inevitable.

Even Voltaire, foremost of cynics, declared: "Unless there be diffused among men a belief in a power to whom day and night are just the same, who takes cognizance of secret as well as overt actions, all law must prove inefficacious." Witness, then, the condition of the super-German

INTRODUCTORY

under the régime of the Idea Kolossal, an unmoral state far worse than the agnosticism Voltaire imagines. All law is inefficacious because of the necessity and efficiency of the German Power to whom not only night and day are just the same, but to whom crime and honor are indistinguishable. It is a state of intensive immorality christened in the name of a new and higher "morality," the right of Might and the new Godliness that has descended upon Germany, and Germany alone.

Could any popular condition be more dangerous? Nearly all mankind is inherently selfish. It is only super-selfishness we abhor in our neighbors, the quality which makes them arrogant and unbearable. Beyond this there can be but one worse attitude, self-worship—deified ego. For thirty-three months the world has been struggling with the frightfulness of this deified ego—*nationalized*,—the malady of Central Europe.

§ 3

Thus far, whenever an exasperated nation cast about for some effigy to burn, it insisted on something in a Prussian officer's uniform, which choice is tantamount to melting the cannon and ignoring the caisson, destroying the instrument and distributing the deadly ammunition among the gunners. The Prussian management of this war, from the first desperate invasion of Belgium down to the latest special indignity, displays the Prussian Managers as men in whom originality and the inspiration which is foresight are

INTRODUCTORY

resigned to the congenital minimum. Tact and a genius for prevision the Prussian has not. Foresight of a lesser sort is more distinctly his talent; he excels in preparation—mechanical thoroughness on a grand scale. So well was Germany prepared that for more than two years the Allies fought uphill—and now after thirty-three months, every remaining visible German advantage stands to the credit of that initial preparation.

In view of this it is evident that the Prussian in himself is not the most terrifying factor of Prussianism. As a world-director the Prussian would be the most lamentable failure in the annals of ruling man. It would be like employing an ardent butcher to undertake the breeding and care of prize stock. The Prussian is the most deficient colonizer in the world. Compare the British rule in South Africa which achieved the loyalty of the Boers in twelve years with that intolerable chapter in the history of the nineteenth century, the Prussianization of Alsace-Lorraine. And the military control in the occupied territory of Belgium and northern France may stand alone—indicting, climactic exposition of the incalculable moods and tenses in the German verb “to govern.”

Furthermore, there is a general sanctification of the Prussian *General* and his widely reputed deadliness, which may be compared to removing the charge of explosive from the caisson's projectiles—and *leaving* the explosive. Hindenburg, Mackensen, Tirpitz, Ludendorf, giants of advertised greatness, have to follow their Rules in the

INTRODUCTORY

glorious game of Deifying the National Ego as concisely as any hapless private. They are as firmly knit to the Idea Kolossal as the brave men of the Prussian Guard who at Verdun charged without their rifles because, according to the Idea, "Supermen" *had to* attack, "Expediency" did not permit any wastage of rifles, and "Efficiency" recognized that the French gunners would be able to roll back the wave of assault before the needed rifles could be used. General and private, alike firmly knit to that which will mean the ultimate ruin of both, press on to that ruin according to the Rules of the Idea.

It might be contended that the War Party made the Rules—but the War Party did not create the Idea. Nor was it proposed by a bombastic Imperial Personage. Kaiser, General Staff, and the Prussian professors and philosophers with their subsidized deductions—Nietzsche, Treitschke, Bernhardi, and the rest—all these helped on the Idea to its crowning effort, the present world conflict; but not any one of them, not all of them united, may be said to have originated it.

This Deified National Ego, the Idea Kolossal, is a growth, a sort of moral cancer, vital, vivid, terrible—and not yet known to be curable. In the ordinary growth of things, in agriculture for example, certain seeds planted anywhere invariably grow certain grains, plants, or vegetables. If corn is planted and will take root, it will only grow up to be corn; no variety of soil, of cultivation, of fertilization will cause it to turn out to be a bumper crop of wheat, or some strange

INTRODUCTORY

weed or fungus unknown to science. This, alas, is not the case with the seeds which are ideas, thoughts, notions, concepts—the seeds which take root in the sort of soil that some call a rational mind. The Idea Kolossal is not only a very distinct product of German “soil”—that is, a distinct product of their intellectual pirouette which the German calls Reason—but also, the seeds from which it grew, planted elsewhere in all the world, could not possibly have yielded such a crop as the Deified National Ego. Kultur, Pan-Germanism, and the Terrorism blandly propounded in the name of Military Necessity are as singularly German as “Krupp” or “Verboten.”

From Cæsar to Napoleon the Latin peoples knew an almost uninterrupted urge of conquest, but never the Deified National Ego. Napoleon expressed his frank conviction that God was on the side of the best artillery, which was about equivalent to stating that in his opinion—and who will deny his experience in the art, the science, and the horror of war?—God disdained to assist mankind when occupied with the working out of its destruction or salvation by so ghastly an enterprise.

“I am his weapon, his sword, his Vicegerent. Woe to the *disobedient* ! Death to cowards and *unbelievers* !” says William the Sudden.

The disobedient to *whom*? The unbelievers in *what*? Such profane effrontery, blasting half a continent with the hot breath of desolation and death, agonizing half the world as the chosen instrument of God—such can belong only to the

INTRODUCTORY

German. Dispersed among the other peoples of the earth there is too much native sense of humor ever to produce a really fertile Deified National Ego.

§ 4

The very "music of the spheres" must be drowned in Olympian laughter as the high gods contemplate these puny, self-anointed conquerors lurching on to destruction under their burden of "Superman." Though the Allies did have to battle with Super-legions, one would hardly expect that the British blockade could not cope as effectively with the Super-appetite. And moreover, if one ounce of biological knowledge had been in the witches' cauldron whence this glamorous Super-Masculine apparition appeared, it would have come forth glacé and ready for the museum.

Our race of men does not progress or deteriorate by any singular plan. The flood tide of human improvement will show equally on both banks and in midstream of the river of Life, for there is a constitutional law of average in such matters of development. Even a German thinker has no more chance of adding the Biblical cubit to his stature than the cutting off of tails through ten thousand generations of dogs has a chance of breeding one tailless canine. If by its thought, its aspirations, its activities the group were now able to modify itself individually, then might there not rise up formidable likelihood of the impending post-bellum generation in Germany being largely disfigured with teeth

INTRODUCTORY

like the ferocious shark or the complexion of the equally ferocious tiger?

Naturally the German does not reason in this way. He is not likely to note the long, waggable tail on the offspring of the ten thousandth generation of experimental dog. He only sees that cutting off the heads of a few hundred Tartars produced a nation of queueless Chinamen. That impresses him; and so, he reasons, the maniacal devastation of a few thousand square miles of fairest Belgium and France ought to produce a dreading Europe—with myself, *Superman*, inspiring the dread, hence, firmly established as Over-Lord. It is thus the scrambled thinking hurries on past a mere grandiloquent phantasy to a very real frightfulness.

Scrambled thinking might be described as a unique process of ratiocination by which the reasoning mind may always *coast* solemnly to its conclusive goal whether the going is downhill or up. Scrambled thinking knows no obstacles. In this it is a most elemental thing of its kind, very like the elemental animal organisms, being able with them to divide into sundry parts, surround the obstruction, and then, the subdivisions converging, become whole again and proceed on its way without visible pain or mental effort.

Now for example—

A German dislikes red, white, or blue neckties. He therefore ominously threatens his neighbors with respect to this dislike. He may even trouble to publish it as an announcement in suburban newspapers. Henceforth, be it known,

INTRODUCTORY

red, white, or blue neckties may not be worn with impunity or without insurance. Yet, lo, an enterprising man in the suburbs has sold certain merchandise to a neighbor of this tasteful German. The man is ready to deliver the merchandise according to contract; but in doing so—an act wholly within his rights as a free citizen of the world—he is furiously confronted by the German. *Gott!* The suburban merchant is wearing a red, white, *and* blue tie—likewise quite within his citizen's rights. However, he is treacherously attacked and killed by the German. And, reasons that conscientious Scrambled Thinker when accused of murder, it was entirely *his* fault! He ought to know better than to wear such a tie where *I* am! Why, I even warned him by special advertisement that I would not tolerate those particular colors!

By this "German" you really mean the Prussian military leaders, of course?—some will suggest. Of course! And yet—why? There are a great many persons familiar with the European catastrophe who are unmistakably opposed to this thoughtful and thoroughly American white-washing of seventy millions of Germans at the easy expense of typical "Junkerdom"—"the War Party"—"the mad Crown Prince"—"bloody Wilhelm." Times of such conflict are not times for such a nice consideration of national sensibilities. Moreover, in recent months the Germans have been at no great pains to prove themselves a people of sensitive feeling. The British Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Bonar Law, has trenchantly stated: "It is

INTRODUCTORY

impossible for the German nature to understand human nature."

We wish by all means to avoid acquiring an unworthy, vengeful spirit; we are not the sort of people to gloat zealously over any American "Hymn of Hate." Yet must we not as consciously avoid concentrating on a "Him of Hate"; is it advisable to chant ourselves into this profound conviction that no "German nature" exists outside of the Kaiser's household, the Wilhelmstrasse, and Great Headquarters? That grand old statesman of France, the new Premier, M. Ribot, spoke without rancor or racial prejudice justifiable under the circumstances, when, in commenting on our zealous American—"Down with the German Government: uplift the German people!"—he said whimsically: "You know we have the saying that a people will have a government as good as they deserve."

§ 5

For the courageously un-Prussianized minds of a Liebknecht or Harden we must reserve all sympathy and respect. From the days of 1874 when Bebel and the elder Liebknecht protested vehemently in the Reichstag against the rape of Alsace-Lorraine to the recent court martial and imprisonment of Liebknecht, the son, there has been consistency and sanity in the leadership and the demands of these extreme German Socialists. And these sane and consistent leaders are something more than *extreme* Germans—they are *honorable*. With them the Allies could arrange

INTRODUCTORY

a permanent settlement of peace; without them peace to be permanently founded will have to be dictated. In short, since to their fellow-countrymen the extreme German Socialists are so many poisonous reptiles, organized,—it would seem that to secure any permanence of peace the Allies *must* dictate their terms, the first item of dictation setting forth that Germany shall be represented by this new group of statesmen who may be trusted.

Thus by necessity rather than in a spirit of revenge have the Allies, a democratic world leagued in a war against war, uncovered their true aim. They must defeat Germany so decisively as to be able to dictate this peace that is to endure. A genuine revolutionary upheaval in Germany might alter this aim. But it is organization which triumphs over the German spirit, and there are not many so hopeful that they believe a revolution can out-organize the established power in Berlin. It is widely conceded that Germany's allies will presently desert. Disillusive cracks are beginning to thread their way across the old palace walls at Vienna and Constantinople and Sofia. There is no writing on these walls, for those who scheme on the Ballplatz and those who rule on the Bosphorus can perceive their approaching downfall without prophecy or prophetic interpreter. But how will this desertion imperil the German military stand? Will not the Great General Staff perhaps welcome the shorter front and solid, rejoice in the diversion of a separate peace?

It is well to weigh against the acclaim of an

INTRODUCTORY

early German democracy certain historical facts: Great Britain fought eight years to hold the American colonies, despite increasing military and geographical disadvantage. France needed from 1789 to 1872 to establish a democratic government now proven triumphantly durable. The Crimean, Turkish, Japanese, and this present war were required to carry Russia from serfdom to the recent republican precipitation. Is it, therefore, to be supposed that those who control Germany will easily yield up their supreme domination? Is any turn, twist, or trickery likely to be spared in their final frantic endeavor to retain it?

In the light of events during the first year of the war—the pronouncedly Teutonic year—it is the height of sentimental folly to take any refrain from this “docile slaves of Prussia” anthem. An undiluted arraignment of Prussia is neither fair nor safe, for some of the war’s most barbarous episodes smolder in the path of battalions from Bavaria and Württemberg. The Germans were not a docile people in that August of 1914. Distaste for war, expressed even by professional soldiers, is small proof of national docility; and it cannot readily be forgotten that nearly all of Germany celebrated the “brave” sinking of the *Lusitania*. When the Uhlan’s sinister pennon fluttered in Senlis, when the metropolitan fire department buried fallen Jaegers in the suburbs of Paris, in this hour of seeming triumph where in all Germany was the conquest unheralded? In those days before the bread card, the shining armor appealed as

INTRODUCTORY

dramatically to the German of low estate, who polished the helmet and cuirass, as to the Overlord who donned it. There is no human record of a child being given a gun and not yielding eventually to the allure of proving the presumed effect of its discharge. And nations are very like children in their weaknesses.

The embattled world had its present and necessary attitude toward Germany thrust upon it—by Germans,—not by any individual, not by a minority of leaders, but in effect by Germans in the mass. To avoid maligning scattered innocents no culprit must be permitted to terms of renewed humane equality and international respectability. Mindful that in those rare instances when a misery-crazed non-combatant actually fired on German troops, his entire community was terribly punished, the Germans can hardly expect to be sifted out with anything but their own thoroughness. Mirabeau said: "Prussia is not a People who have an Army; it is an Army who have a People." When the links between military establishment and domestic existence are forged as close and strong as those of modern Imperial Germany, the People are bound to suffer humiliation and distress at the abolition of the Army.

§ 6

A great legend has been growing up even while most of us in America were yet concerned chiefly with the commonplaces of daily enterprise. The eyes of centuries to come may seem to watch our every move, for it has invariably been at

INTRODUCTORY

the close of each great war that the basis of future conflict was arranged. Some day the interplanetary telegraphers will be sending out this legend to far-distant worlds. The Beginning and the Middle of our Legend of the Potsdam Problem and the Sanitation of Central Europe are now complete. They may take divers forms, be shaped by many strange fancies; but the evidence is in, confirmed and exact, and the main thread of the narrative must run true, untangled by the ages.

But what of the Ending?

Are we to be proud of it? Is the legend to conclude with firmness and fairness, with foresight and with strength—or in vacillation, in weakness, in treachery to those who have freely given their blood that there might be an ending. German war prisoners are reported to have said: “When this war is over those who are responsible for it will pay.” That is the spirit for their salvation. And yet there is the problem: How to show these men who really *is* responsible; how to dethrone this Deified *National Ego* in its fool’s paradise?

Particularly in these broad United States of ours has there been an offensively voluble expenditure of admiration on the efficiency, the solidity, the greatness of Germany and “the German people.” *Greatnesses* which even the Germans had not discovered in themselves were proclaimed as reasons for our not interfering in the ruthless program that spread their vandalism through some of the fairest districts of Europe. The German would wantonly blow up a mag-

INTRODUCTORY

nificent architectural relic. His excuse: "There are many such in south Germany." And from our Iron-crossed obstructionists: "Yes, that is so. Germany is a beautiful country."

To these latter it was unthinkable that America should assist autocratic Russia in crushing a "liberal" nation like Germany. The authority of the "cleanliness next to Godliness" precept has never been questioned. Our truly pro-*Germans*, however, had to justify civic cleanliness and internal order *above* international Godliness, and at times were compelled to nourish themselves for days on mere contemplations of abstract Imperial efficiency. They loudly contended that Great Britain was more militaristic with its mighty navy than Germany with its mighty army—a contention little credited in America, well aware that the Bernhardt of British militarism is our own naval authority, the late Admiral Mahan. And then Russia broke the German shackle of treason and the bureaucratic shackle of tyranny, and, both hands freed, could supplement her allies' strictly democratic line-up. With this last veil rent before wondering hyphenate eyes, with America coming into the war on the side of justice and right, the voices of "neutrality" were silent. In a question of allegiance there can be no neutrality.

But will not these voices again be heard? The German Government deliberately provoked a state of war with the United States, believing that we would not be an important military opponent, cunningly assuming that American delegates in the ultimate Peace Congress would

INTRODUCTORY

tend to a German advantage. Germany expects, in short, that our delegates will be disposed to lighten the punishment so richly deserved. Public opinion in the United States is certain to influence our delegation at the great Peace Conference to come; but if we come up to the expectation of the Wilhelmstrasse, if through folly, ignorance, or through deliberate treachery any section of our public adds its weight in influencing the patched-up peace which the present Imperial German Government desires, in effect a tactical German victory, then the crime of that folly, ignorance, or deliberate treachery will stand out against us, as black a silhouette as any single crime of Germany on the pages of recent history, to be condemned and deplored by future generations.

§ 7

At the very beginning of this mighty conflict the Kaiser, informed that French troops had captured Thann in Alsace, exclaimed: "If I must give back Alsace to France I will give her back as bald as an egg." But for the Allied armies and the Atlantic Ocean with its guardian British fleet, New York, Boston, Philadelphia—any community, any State on our Atlantic seaboard might have shared the cruel fate of an Alsace. We have it on the unquestionable authority of Mr. Gerard, our late Ambassador at Berlin, that the German Government intended making wealthy America pay the bill of the war in the event of its victorious culmination.

Not since ancient times has the world been

INTRODUCTORY

seriously confronted with the menace of a "chosen people." In previous barbaric invasions the invaded peoples were not hampered by any great degree of civilization; they were themselves sufficiently barbarous to know how to deal with the scourge. The world now wishes to cling to as much of civilization as is safely possible. After the war there will be the delicate problem of trying to forget, if not immediately to forgive. At present, however, it is the serious and single duty of every true American to acquaint himself thoroughly with each particular element of the Teutonic Peril. Because we are geographically more fortunate than Belgium or France or Servia is no reason for our having different aims than those nations. Let us not falter at telling the truth through any cultivated sense of "justice" to this self-conscious terror among nations that has not voluntarily resigned itself and its greedy efficiency to any particular act of international justice in forty years.

Forty years—

Thus quickly has Imperial Germany, as founded by Bismarck's magic, come to the brink of disaster when deprived of that masterly balancing, that unerring genius of the foremost diplomatic liar of his age. The Germans in Belgium and marching on Paris were superbly arrogant. After the Marne they were less so. On the Somme and the Aisne their attitude became sullen. On the Rhine, on the Elbe perhaps, there will be whining and lamentation.

But peace must be dictated to the Germans of 1914 if any of the commanders then are still in

INTRODUCTORY

power. No treaties dare be made with those whose waste baskets yawn ever conveniently, with those whose initial necessity knew neither law nor honor. They may not be trusted; they must not be tempted. No experiment with them dare be tried, no second chance tendered by the fatuously forgiving; for it is not customary to employ pardoned murderers in shooting galleries, or to recruit the janitors of young ladies' schools from among those who have served prison sentences for assault.

Thirty-one months ago Herr Bassermann, leader of the National Liberals, outlining in the Reichstag a popular view of the German imperial policy toward Belgium, France, and the world in general, declaimed:

Let us retain all the territory we already occupy, and also what we shall yet conquer and think necessary to keep. . . . "Through Bloody War to Glorious Victory" is our motto.

In keeping with the eloquent evidence of Herr Bassermann there is that of Herr Doktor Leonard of the faculty of Heidelberg, who in the autumn of 1914 was thus quoted in a Hamburg newspaper:

Down with all consideration for England's so-called culture! The central nest and supreme academy for all hypocrisy in the world, London, must be destroyed. No respect for the tomb of Shakespeare, Newton, and Faraday!

By penal law an attempted but thwarted crime is not always punished as severely as a completed one; but in international relations it is

INTRODUCTORY

only the disappointed criminal who ever may be properly punished, or, in fact, even be regarded publicly as a criminal. Ambitious Germany, thwarted by the unexpected heroism of its prey, is still ambitious—*criminally* ambitious Germany.

And, lastly, note the 1914 canard of Herr Doktor Adolphus Lasson, an Imperial Privy Councillor, in a letter to a well-known Hollander:

Foreigner means enemy. No one can remain neutral to the German State and people. A man who is not a German knows nothing of Germany. We are morally and intellectually superior beyond all comparison as to our organizations and institutions. We Germans have no friends anywhere, because we are efficient and morally superior to all.

The German has dwelt with this Superman—has gloated over his super-preparation for the Super-scheme of world-control with its necessary frightfulness, its consequent super-devastation. If the world at arms is to make sure of no repetition of these, the super-horrifying, then the German must not be spared his Super-defeat.

For all of us in America this goal of Justice and Honor lies straight ahead. In such an electric moment of world-crisis, in this hour of Liberty's peril, this day of Democracy's severest travail, the quickening beat of every true heart should be timed to the words of Edith Cavell before the German firing squad—"*As I stand here in the presence of Eternity I find that patriotism is not enough.*"

R. W. R.

Washington, May 20, 1917.



DIALOGUE I



DIALOGUE I

Place. Interior of a spacious, luxuriously furnished private office. Headquarters—"somewhere in Germany."

Persons. A German General and a secret service agent.

VON A. [*looking up from a report he is reading*]. You have done well, Gletzen—very well, indeed.

GLETZEN [*with relief*]. Thank you, General.

VON A. [*jubilantly referring back to a page*]. Yes—very well, indeed.

GLETZEN. I tried to do my best.

VON A. [*with sudden sarcasm*]. I hope the effort was not exceptional.

GLETZEN [*shrewdly*]. I always try to do my best, General.

VON A. Well, I believe you do—and I believe I have done something for you from time to time—eh—Gletzen?

GLETZEN [*gravely*]. You have done much for me, General.

VON A. Well—sit down. You are dealing with *me*, remember. I have changed much in the

past year. I am younger than some of these—some of my colleagues. It is easier for me to adapt myself to changes—to the new conditions. I am sick and tired of the starch in our army method. Sit down. If you were the sort that I could only impress and over-awe and force into a state of perfect obedience by keeping you at attention—I wouldn't use you.

GLETZEN [*seating himself easily*]. Thank you.

VON A. [*amused*]. You also have adaptability, I see. It is a rare gift, Gletzen. I encourage it in myself and in others. Those of us here in Germany who possess it are going to come out all right in this present trouble. The others—these old, starched, heel-clicking fools—they are going to go under.

GLETZEN. Yes, sir.

VON A. [*sharply*]. Are you agreeing with me—or being politic?

GLETZEN. I heartily agree, sir.

VON A. I wish you to understand clearly—you are not being compelled in *this* matter. I have taken you into my confidence because I see in you one who will understand. You are not an officer—you make no pretense of being a gentleman—of having birth and breeding. You do profess to have brains. I think you have common-sense as well, and a fairly clear judgment and foresight. You will be very useful,

and in the new Germany rank is going to depend almost entirely on usefulness. Those who seem useful to the people, they will be the leaders. I am going to be one of those leaders. You can figure out for yourself the possibilities for you who seem useful to a leader?

GLETZEN. I think I understand.

VON A. [*brusquely*]. Then I have your willing coöperation?

GLETZEN. You have, General.

VON A. Very well. Nearly every one else involved in this affair is going to have to be—compelled,—pulled up by some little steel thread they don't yet feel attached to them. But I want one who serves as I serve—for the love and the power of it.

GLETZEN. That is how I am serving, General.

VON A. That is the only way you *can* serve me, Gletzen. Now as to this report? You say these poor starving fools are being guided in their plotting by agents of the Allies?

GLETZEN. Andre Besson is living among them—he came with them. He is highly regarded on the Quai d'Orsay——

VON A. [*sardonically*]. And respected on the Wilhelmstrasse, eh, Gletzen?

GLETZEN. Yes, sir. He has had an exceptional habit of success, sir.

VON A. You think he is the only one?

GLETZEN. There is, of course, this Raoul Arlant—the Alsatian.

VON A. Yes, yes—but he came to the exiles' camp as a refugee—an escaping war prisoner. I meant—any other that came with them, as this Besson came?

GLETZEN. I am certain there is no other. Besson calls himself Phillipe—*old* Phillipe—his disguise is one of the best I have ever had to penetrate.

VON A. The suffering and privation he endures may account in part for the aged appearance.

GLETZEN. No doubt. Even our little Celestine shows it—and she gets extra rations.

VON A. But you say the little fool gives away most of that to the others?

GLETZEN. It would be hard to do otherwise, General. Their condition is fearful.

VON A. I daresay—but come—no sentiment now. We have other things as fearful to consider. You are convinced this girl is betraying us?

GLETZEN. I am not able to report that with conviction. She turns in petty complaints—

VON A. To bear up our confidence in her?

GLETZEN. No doubt. Still—though she has made numerous attempts to escape the service, she has been a very effective worker—one of the

best. I do not think we should judge her until we have actual evidence.

VON A. But this plotting? Do you think for a moment she could live there among them—with it going on under her nose—and not detect it?

GLETZEN. Having her assigned to the same hut with Andre—that is, “Old Phillipe,” whom we suspected from the first—I think that was a serious mistake. If she is going to betray us, we have doubled her opportunity of service. If she means to go on with us, we have greatly handicapped her.

VON A. You mean this Phillipe is so clever.

GLETZEN. He is more than that. I have played our game all over the world for years—and I tell you I should hate to be put to live in a hut—practically the same room with him—and then be expected to serve the Wilhelmstrasse, make reports, observations——

VON A. Enough. It is chivalrous of you to defend her,—but there is evidence you do not know about. This very morning—in response to a peremptory demand, she reported that so far as she could determine, there were no French agents among the exiles.

GLETZEN [*astonished*]. She did that? Well, I am beaten then, she *is* trying to trick us.

VON A. Which is precisely what I want her to do, Gletzen.

GLETZEN. I do not attempt to understand.

VON A. You will in time [*ironically*]. At present I do not wish to burden you with unnecessary details.

GLETZEN. I appreciate that, General.

VON A. [*laughing*]. Now don't grow sarcastic. That is the privilege of critics and superiors. You shall have my complete confidence when the cards are finally dealt.

GLETZEN. And until then?

VON A. Until then I expect you to be patient. You must return to the exiles' camp and continue your stay there most guardedly. This plotting of theirs must be facilitated in every possible way. Of course, the guards must know nothing of that. It is hard to say how many of them are on terms of indiscreet intimacy with the—the—shall we speak as for publication and say—"imported alien laborers," eh? Your duty will be to stay in the background and devise reasonable employment for the guards so as to enable these plotters to meet. The poor fools, the poor brave fools,——to think of their attempting to plot against us when they are dying by inches—starving to death? It is admirable, eh, Gletzen?

GLETZEN. It is something splendid in them, General. They have a spirit different from the spirit of our people.

VON A. Of course—it is the spirit that is beating us, Gletzen.

GLETZEN. And about Celestine?

VON A. We will pretend to believe her report, but it might be well to pull her up sharply on this ration question. If the one who gives her the extra portion failed to appear occasionally, she might appreciate our strong position so far as she is concerned.

GLETZEN. I do not think that would have much effect, General.

VON A. Well, I leave it to you. But we must not lose any chance to help her betray us. I want her thoroughly involved in their plot. She is clever and attractive, you say—she ought to win a high place in their councils.

GLETZEN. And about Arlant?

VON A. You say he too lives with Phillipe, —quite a barnyard, eh? Well, let him recover. In the days of his escaping—his hiding without food, the little surplus strength he started with must have used up quickly enough. I guess he is too weak to be dangerous, even with the girl to assist him.

GLETZEN. I suspect an attachment there. Celestine—

VON A. [*triumphantly*]. You do? Why didn't you say so at once? Nurse, patient,—weakness, tenderness,—patriotism, love—and all

that? Splendid! Now we *will* be able to use her. Gletzen, she must be involved in that plot, she *must*, do you hear?

GLETZEN. I will do my best, General. I will obey any suggestion you make.

VON A. I have none at present, but I will wire you if there is anything new for you to use. Get back there as quickly as possible and above all—don't let them discover you. If this old Phillipe, as he calls himself, is so clever and dangerous—perhaps you had better attend to him at once—to-morrow—the usual thing——

GLETZEN [*unmoved*]. Very well, General.

VON A. And the girl, little Celestine, I believe she is just the one we are going to need,——this plot is actually made to our order.

GLETZEN. I do not clearly understand you, General, but I will do my best and obey orders.

VON A. Of course you will. And particularly—about Celestine, she knows you, so keep out of her way,——don't depend even on the best disguise you know. She is a real gift from Heaven.

GLETZEN. I think we may make a sort of German Joan of Arc out of that little Belgian girl.

DIALOGUE II





DIALOGUE II

Place. Interior of an exiles' hut "somewhere in Germany."

Persons. Two "old" women, disheveled and ragged and sullen, prematurely aged by hardship and slow starvation, every line and gesture indicating terribly that insidious malaria of the soul which soon shrouds these unfortunate people in Belgium and northern France.

BELGIAN WOMAN. How long has it been?

FRENCH WOMAN [*dully*]. What been?

BELGIAN WOMAN. How long has he been gone?

FRENCH WOMAN. I don't know. How should I know? Where is there a clock?

BELGIAN WOMAN [*with a kind of vague irony*]. So they didn't leave you even a handsome gold watch?

FRENCH WOMAN. Is it going to your head?

BELGIAN WOMAN. It? You mean hunger?

FRENCH WOMAN. Is there anything else [*showing faint emotion*]? You don't feel the fever coming, do you?

BELGIAN WOMAN. No, not yet. And it's not fever anyway. It's starvation—and weariness. They just lie down and are glad to die, glad they can't live any more.

FRENCH WOMAN. *They* call it fever.

BELGIAN WOMAN. Yes, *they* do—the swine. And who does it deceive? Not even their own rotting consciences? *Fever?* Water and beets and a little of this stuff they call bread,—bread—with potatoes and haricots making up most of it. Fever would be a blessing.

FRENCH WOMAN [*dully continuing her proposition*]. And you call it fever.

BELGIAN WOMAN. Oh,—well—one gets the habit. Yesterday—sixty-seven dead,—Fever! Tuesday—twenty-eight dead,—Fever! Monday—eighty-four dead,—Fever! Big day—Monday—no count kept on Sunday, that's why. Saturday—forty-seven—

FRENCH WOMAN [*roused to a protest*]. Stop! Stop it! Don't I know? Can you *enjoy* telling it? Do you think you have so long to live that you've time to waste counting up the others?

BELGIAN WOMAN. I forget. I'm so tired and so faint—and nothing to eat. How long has he been gone?

FRENCH WOMAN. I said I couldn't tell. The moon is up high and bright.

BELGIAN WOMAN. You were here when he left.

FRENCH WOMAN. Where were you?

BELGIAN WOMAN [*pointedly ignoring the question*]. You were here when he left—how long has it been?

FRENCH WOMAN. He left at the usual hour—according to the rule. I had just come from the field. Where were you?

BELGIAN WOMAN. Then he's been gone nearly four hours.

FRENCH WOMAN. Yes, it must be nearly midnight. Where were you when——

BELGIAN WOMAN [*yielding to the unflagging persistence*]. I was stopped.

FRENCH WOMAN [*slightly stirred*]. Stopped? A soldier?

BELGIAN WOMAN [*disdainfully*]. One of these old Landsturm wrecks—not likely! You are polite, though,—a real compliment in fact. Do I look so fetching? These rags? The filth? God! How much longer can this last?

FRENCH WOMAN. Why were you stopped?

BELGIAN WOMAN. I was trying to smuggle a little food——

FRENCH WOMAN. Food? What kind of food? You don't mean you really had some—something—something like before the war. White bread? Fruit?

BELGIAN WOMAN. No,—certainly not. It's true about this food rule. Even their officers don't have so much. Food is really scarce. We get the worst,—and the prisoners of war hardly get anything better. The soldiers' is bad enough, and even the officers' not so good—that's the way it goes.

FRENCH WOMAN [*perplexed by this graded array of information*]. How do you know? You run on so! I can never make it all out.

BELGIAN WOMAN. I know what I'm told. A guard told me,—the old one by the higher ground. I was put to work over there yesterday—and again to-day. Yesterday he gave me a drink from his canteen. He's not so bad,—and he told me all about the food being used up. He's had four sons killed in the war. He says he feels hungry himself—hungry nearly all day. He says the soldiers get little enough,—it was so even before his last son was killed—there was not enough food then, he says.

FRENCH WOMAN [*thoughtfully*]. It's funny. So many die and still there is less food. Our armies are killing them as fast as they can—and here in the camps we die as fast as we can—and yet there is never enough food. I am so hungry. Why is it that he does not come with the ration?

BELGIAN WOMAN. Maybe I had better try to go

out and look for him. It's very dark. The guards would not see me. He may have been hurt——

FRENCH WOMAN. He may have fainted.

BELGIAN WOMAN. I'll try to find out.

FRENCH WOMAN. No, don't go—don't risk it. They'll catch you out—and you never know,—they punish so many when one is caught breaking their rules. You mustn't——

BELGIAN WOMAN. Well, we can only wait then. But four hours—to stand in line—and it is not a good night. You say he went at the regular hour.

FRENCH WOMAN. Yes,—certainly,—you weren't here yet—[*recalling the former point of conversation*]. You were stopped? You found food——

BELGIAN WOMAN. Not really food—but I hoped we might eat it—or be able to make a kind of mash out of it.

FRENCH WOMAN. What?

BELGIAN WOMAN. They put me to work in the farther field to-day—they are trying to raise vegetables there. It is not good ground and they have not the right sort of fertilizer. The old guard by the hill says that something they use in gunpowder is needed in the fertilizer, and there is not enough for both.

FRENCH WOMAN. They had better think of the vegetables. They cannot eat the powder.

BELGIAN WOMAN [*bitterly*]. A Boche does not need to eat if he may still have something to kill and destroy with.

FRENCH WOMAN. Never mind—what about your new field work?

BELGIAN WOMAN. Yes. They are trying to make a very fine garden. It is to have everything growing in it—all sorts of excellent things. Not for us, of course,—nor for the guards. It is to supply some general or important person. I am sure of that,—they're taking such pains, even planting flowers.

FRENCH WOMAN. And you took some of the vegetables—some of those just grown?

BELGIAN WOMAN. There are none grown yet. I only took roots and bulbs,—but a big handful—that is, two small handfuls. I had them well hidden. Somehow—well, some one must have seen me take them. They let me go on till it was time to stop the work. When we were ordered to gather for marching back, I was stopped,—they made me wait——

FRENCH WOMAN. Who?

BELGIAN WOMAN. The sergeant and three men. They asked me if I had taken anything.

FRENCH WOMAN. You tried to lie?

BELGIAN WOMAN. Of course. I said—No! I said I could hardly drag myself back to this miserable hole without trying to carry their seeds.

FRENCH WOMAN [*impressed by the artistic naturalness of this evasion*]. That was so.

BELGIAN WOMAN. But they searched me and soon found them.

FRENCH WOMAN [*thoroughly aroused*]. They marched you off and searched you?

BELGIAN WOMAN [*trying to speak lightly*]. Marched me off,—where? They just searched me—and found the stuff.

FRENCH WOMAN. They—they searched you—they—— The beasts!

BELGIAN WOMAN. Yes. But the others had all been marched away. It was not as bad—just soldiers—— Nothing seems so bad now. If you had come from a village as I have—where they charged that there had been shooting from the houses. That is always it. “You fired on us!” they say, and then they go ahead with their revenge—their *punishment*. God! After that one can only think of horror when it is in the midst of a crowd,—with homes,—with mothers, and little children. I am used to anything now. Nothing matters,—even this searching—a little more ragged, that’s all. And then, they only took the roots and bulbs—no punishment, no beating, hardly a threat. These guards of ours are about done for. They’re old and they’re sick of their work. ‘Eating these things mixed like this would probably have killed you, you

fool'—the sergeant said,—and that was all. I put on my rags and came here.

FRENCH WOMAN. If only you could have kept some.

BELGIAN WOMAN. Oh, well——

[An old man enters, and stands a moment swaying, then sinks down in utter exhaustion.]

FRENCH WOMAN. What is the matter,—what has happened?

OLD MAN. They let us wait in line for hours,—they say nothing,—when we murmur and complain we are threatened with bayonets. We cry out in weariness and anguish—a few cry out in anger. We become reckless in our hunger and despair.

BELGIAN WOMAN. You get no rations,—you have brought us nothing.

OLD MAN. Nothing. Nearly four hours I waited—many went away unable to endure it,—many fainted,—three are dead, they say. At last it was announced that from now on all rations are to be given out for the whole day—given once each day,—it will be like getting one meal.

BELGIAN WOMAN. And to-night?

OLD MAN. To-night we get nothing. The new system is begun to-day.

BELGIAN WOMAN. But our meal at noon was

not extra in size. Why didn't they tell us then,—give us more—warn us to save something?

FRENCH WOMAN. And the evening meal was the only one that gave us a little corn. Why are we to be deprived of that? It was not much, but it seemed to help so after a day's work. Why——

OLD MAN [*his head held wearily between his hands*]. Is it necessary to ask—Why? You know. They want to kill us. Taking us out deliberately to shoot us down,—they have tired of that. In each of us there is a little strength left which they can use. We are given just enough food to keep us alive until that little strength has ebbed away. They herd us about,—we are not half so valuable in their eyes as cattle. No, not a tenth as valuable. If they should decide themselves at the necessity of eating us, then you would see our price go up. We should be fed well and fattened,—or at least permitted to keep clean. I heartily wish it would be so.

FRENCH WOMAN. Oh, not that,—don't say it. It is too terrible!

BELGIAN WOMAN [*softly*]. He is sick and crazed by his suffering. Let him say what he pleases, if it relieves him.

OLD MAN. Two in front of me to-night was the little boy from the fourth hut over the way,—

you know, the little Louis. He has such a fearful cough, and is so pale. When we had waited only a little while and every one thought it was but an ordinary delay, he began to cough terribly. I begged to be allowed to wait in line for him also. But it was not permitted. He stayed like a brave little soldier till the very end, but he was too weak to walk home. I carried him—it delayed me only a little longer.

BELGIAN WOMAN. Come, let us try not to think of this. A little more hunger will hardly matter now.

OLD MAN. How brave you are!

FRENCH WOMAN. Yes, that is so. Margot, you help us so much,—where does your spirit come from to keep on and on, always trying to make the best of the endless terror?

BELGIAN WOMAN [*striving to distract her despairing companions*]. I have to try to keep up my own spirits by seeming to help encourage others. I sometimes think I have ceased to need either food or air to live. I live on the thought of the revenge that must come. It *must*. There can be no other way—it will be God's justice. We who have suffered most by these fearful crimes,—we can never be repaid,—we have been dragged down beyond saving. But those who have crushed and starved and abused and killed us,—they *can* be punished.

I am not of a vengeful spirit. No individual who has harmed me or those around me would I wish to see tortured in return. I do not hate that way. I blame the great mass,—the thousands and millions who have brought this on us by their power as a mass. I want to live to see them come crashing down to the defeat and distress they have made for others. In the new Belgian army fighting beside the French and British there is one whom I *must* live to see again—my only near relative they have left alive——

FRENCH WOMAN. Your son?

BELGIAN WOMAN. Son? You think me old enough to have a son in the army? I seem a haggard old woman? Yet the day the Germans marched into Dinant I was not yet twenty-six.

OLD MAN. Any one could tell it,—of course you are young.

BELGIAN WOMAN [*with a weak smile*]. You are ever gallant, little father. Well, young or old, my relative in the army is a brother. I know he is still alive. He was wounded once and I knew that—felt it long before word came by the slow, secret way such things came to us in Belgium—came to us, that is, before this order of exile, taking the “*able-bodied*.” What a terrible toll their war collects from strength and health!

And the mockery of the selection! You, little father, for instance——

OLD MAN [*brightening up*]. I am strong enough. Given a little food I could do as well as any.

BELGIAN WOMAN. In spirit you do better than most. . . . When—when is the next meeting?

OLD MAN [*instantly cautious*]. To-morrow night.

BELGIAN WOMAN. Is there any change of plan?

OLD MAN. Not any I have heard. We are to strike one great blow for ourselves. The armies are fighting desperately to rescue us from the power of these brutes. We in our turn must try to help them from the rear.

FRENCH WOMAN. We are dying anyway. If we could arm ourselves and each kill one—that would be something.

OLD MAN. It would do well enough if we really could each take one,—but we are weak and such weapons as we could gather would not amount to much. They are all heavily armed—and with their machine guns,—ah, we could hardly take them off with us forty to one.

BELGIAN WOMAN. The plan is much better as it is. It will strike deep or not at all.

FRENCH WOMAN. Does she know about it yet?

OLD MAN. She? Celestine? No,—not yet.

BELGIAN WOMAN. That is not fair. She ought to know.

OLD MAN. She will in good time. She could add nothing to an unfinished plan. She must not excite herself. It would ruin the whole affair.

BELGIAN WOMAN. She should have been told.

FRENCH WOMAN. Perhaps she won't do it?

OLD MAN. She will have to do it. We must have a woman—a young woman,—one who is clever and attractive.

FRENCH WOMAN. Still—she may refuse. She is not the right sort,—it is not her work. Can't some other young woman be found?

OLD MAN. There is no other.

BELGIAN WOMAN. There were *young* women?

OLD MAN. Yes,—but not now. We have considered each one. She is the only choice. She is miraculously spared for the great purpose.

FRENCH WOMAN. But that is a particular reason why she may refuse.

OLD MAN. She is certainly brave enough for it?

FRENCH WOMAN. Yes. It will not be any question of bravery.

BELGIAN WOMAN. I know what you are trying to tell him. Little father, she means that we have discovered something about Celestine,

—something you men of the meeting do not know.

OLD MAN. What is it?

BELGIAN WOMAN. She was a novice in the convent of Our Lady of St. Hilaire when the invasion came to Belgium.

OLD MAN. A sister?

FRENCH WOMAN. A novice.

OLD MAN. Our plan cannot be altered.

FRENCH WOMAN. She will not want to do it.

BELGIAN WOMAN. There is not much chance of her succeeding if she tries—unwillingly.

FRENCH WOMAN. It will be difficult work, you know?

OLD MAN. Our plan cannot be altered. She is the only one,—she must do it.

FRENCH WOMAN. But if willingly——?

OLD MAN. She must do it willingly. She will. We have studied her. She is different from us. There is a different spirit about her.

BELGIAN WOMAN. Every one notices that.

OLD MAN. She is the only one who can succeed.

BELGIAN WOMAN. But after all—the plan may not be possible anyway——?

OLD MAN. You argue to spare her. The plan *is* possible. She will strike a great blow for victory.

FRENCH WOMAN. She will not want to do it.

OLD MAN. You have said it often enough. We have chosen her. She *must* do it.

FRENCH WOMAN. But how——?

OLD MAN. There are ways. We can force her——

BELGIAN WOMAN. In all this misery and death and desolation are we also to use force?

DIALOGUE III

DIALOGUE III

Place. Interior of Celestine's hut among the exiles.

Persons. Two children, a boy and a girl of perhaps twelve and fourteen respectively, lie sprawled out on the floor in exhausted sleep. A man, wrapped to the eyes in a long cloak, sits drowsing, propped up against the crude plank wall, and near him a young woman crouches watchfully. The cloaked one is stirring, restless—a moan, and the young woman moves over softly and kneels at his side, touching him gently, a timid caress.

CELESTINE. Raoul?

RAOUL. Yes,—I am awake now.

CELESTINE. You are feeling better? It is not much cooler now. But the cloak——

RAOUL. It is night, eh? It is very dark.

CELESTINE. We are allowed no light. Sunrise to sunset is our day.

RAOUL [*weakly throwing off the cloak*]. It is better not to see so well.

CELESTINE. Yes.

RAOUL. Where are the others?

CELESTINE. The children are fast asleep over there—worn out,—and no supper after all.

RAOUL. There was no ration?

CELESTINE. Not to-night—a new rule. I could get you nothing. The soup I got yesterday will be the last, I fear. It cost Franz five days in the guard house—another rule,—five days' imprisonment for any one giving up extra food to us or to prisoners.

RAOUL. Franz?

CELESTINE. An assistant cook—for the soldiers,—a fine old Saxon. His generosity has brought him five days of the starvation we know so well. Raoul, it is terrible.

RAOUL. And I am a dead weight on you. Your little allowance you have to divide.

CELESTINE. That is nothing. I have never eaten heartily,—and now I can scarcely eat at all,—this terror, this sickness all around—

RAOUL. Was the—the count heavy to-day?

CELESTINE. Three less than yesterday—sixty-four. They are thinning us out fast. When we were brought here, every hut was crowded—eight and ten, and even twelve promiscuously allotted to what is little more than a single, small room. Now there is scarcely one with more than half left,—often only three or four—as here.

RAOUL. *Here?* [*In agitation.*] You mean old Phillipe——

CELESTINE. Yes,—he is gone,—to-day, in the field. What a fine fellow he was, Raoul?

RAOUL [*weakly*]. Yes. [*Pulling himself together.*] He had real ability as an organizer—and to think he had no chance to use it till this.

CELESTINE. You mean—the council—the secret meetings——?

RAOUL. Yes,—he was one of its principal organizers. And if it had not been for him, I should never have reached here—and you——

CELESTINE [*interrupting hurriedly*]. Listen, Raoul. I have been waiting for you to wake to tell you something—something very important. The children are sound asleep. I hesitated to speak to you,—you are far from strong yet,—but there is no one—and I must have advice,—I have got to talk it over with some one. Listen while I tell you.

RAOUL. You know how I feel toward you,—that my life is yours——

CELESTINE. Yes, yes—but wait. Listen,—to-day I discovered for the first time something of the real meaning of these meetings, which—as you say—were started chiefly through the spirit and energy of old Phillipe. To-day for the first time I discovered in part the plan these unfortunate men have been working out. Never

mind how I learned it,—that will come later,—let me first tell you what I learned. They have planned to strike on their own account. The Allied armies are fighting their way forward to the rescue. Cowed, brutally beaten, starving,—yet the spirit of these people has not been broken. They mean to strike a great blow. By some strange chance they have come to depend on me in their plan. Of that I am certain.

RAOUL. You know how old Phillipe admired you. He often said you were the most remarkable woman he had ever known,—the only one here who appears able to face these cruel hardships undaunted,—who seems to be looking forever forward, regardless of hardships, hardly touched by them,—forever forward to some goal unseen by us. He idolized you,—your own father could not have loved—— [*He checks himself abruptly at her sudden change of expression.*] Forgive me? You have never mentioned anything about your home or family—I did not know——

CELESTINE. It is all right. You were going to say that my own father could not have been more devoted to me. Old Phillipe was ten times *more* than a father to me—that is, such a father as I have known. But about this plan,—I know they are including me in it. Just what I am to do I have not been able to discover. But

the fact remains that they have chosen me for this great service,—*me*——

RAOUL [*disturbed by her emotion*]. But you will be given a choice—you will not *have* to do it.

CELESTINE. You think I am afraid? No,—Raoul, it is not that. It is because I am so glad. I am to be given a chance to redeem myself.

RAOUL [*amazed*]. Redeem?

CELESTINE. Yes! Redeem. I am to be given a chance to carry out their plan. I am not clever,—not original. If I had known anything I could do,—any service I might perform,—any sacrifice—I have been so willing. But there has seemed to be nothing really worth while for me——

RAOUL. But why do you say redeem? That I cannot understand.

CELESTINE. Because—oh, it is too terrible to say it. You must not know,—I am selfish to excite you like this when you are still weak——

RAOUL. I am not weak. [*He makes an heroic effort to prove his renewed strength by rising.*] See? [*His attempt fails miserably and he sinks back with a despairing sob.*] To be so—it is only imagination. See? I am strong and well again. [*He rises, drooping muscles compelled by will, and staggers blindly away from the wall. The children stir in their sleep. Celestine assists him back to his former place, with a warning gesture toward the sleepers.*]

CELESTINE. You must not disturb them. Don't be foolish. You aren't well yet,—you will never be well with the sort of food and care you get here if you yourself do not help by being quiet and patient.

RAOUL [*again propped up against the wall, breathing heavily from his recent uncalculated exertion*]. Forgive me! I'm a childish fool. You give me the best of care, keep me here under cover, undiscovered by the guards—and I return it by—this—— Can you forgive me?

CELESTINE. What is there to forgive? I know how you want to be able and strong again—but you must realize that it will be a slow recovery under such conditions. You have nothing to build on. The food of the prison-camp gave you nothing—and then three days without anything at all while you were trying to escape—I shall never understand how you survived.

RAOUL. I shall never know how I managed to escape. [*More brightly.*] But come now,—I am not so weak that I cannot be consulted. You said you waited for me to wake to tell me something. What is it? And your word—*redeem*? I must know about that. You worry me,—I can see how troubled you are, and how you try to control it.

CELESTINE. Then listen—and I beg you to hear me to the end. My word——

RAOUL. I trust you above every one else in the world.

CELESTINE. Wait! You have not heard—you would never have suspected. I am—I have been—that is, at the Wilhelmstrasse I am—listed.

RAOUL. Listed?

CELESTINE. Yes. I have a number. I am regarded as an agent of the German secret service.

RAOUL [*starting up*]. You? The Wilhelmstrasse?

CELESTINE. A German spy,—yes.

RAOUL. My God! No,—it is not true,—you are not telling me the whole truth of it!

CELESTINE. You are the first to know the real truth. But I beg you to hear——

RAOUL. And I have loved you so.

CELESTINE. Raoul!

RAOUL [*ardently*]. Yes,—I have loved you forever I believe. It was not mere chance that brought me here,—I know that now——

CELESTINE. Raoul,—you must not say these things—don't you see how you are making it so much more terrible for me. Let me tell you my story. We must not speak of love.

RAOUL. I cannot help it, dear. In these days while I have stayed here hidden away at the risk of your life, cared for by you, sharing your

ration,—the pitifully small amount of food you had for yourself, divided with me——

CELESTINE. You are weak and sick. I have only done a small duty on your account. You must not estimate it so highly,—reward it so greatly with your love——

RAOUL. You think I am a boy—declaring my love because you have been kind to me. Celestine, we Alsations know by heart every chapter in life's book of misery and hardship. Living is a very real thing to us,—we know its every distress,—we are not likely to mistake its one greatest joy when at last that comes.

CELESTINE. Raoul, you are only torturing me. It is all too dark and horrible now to think of anything so happy and bright as love. I beg you to hear me,—let me explain my—my treason——

RAOUL. *Treason?* No, you must not speak of it that way. I do believe in you. I know you can explain it all away. You were trapped?

CELESTINE. Yes,—trapped——

RAOUL. That is always their way. They get their agents everywhere in foreign countries through some trickery. That is the Wilhelmstrasse!

CELESTINE. Yes. This was the way of my experience. To begin the story—well, my father—— I must begin with him. He was

worthless,—dissolute and brutal,—wholly selfish,—a gambler—and in the worst way,—petty and low,—a cheat even——

RAOUL. My dearest dear,—you are tearing at your very soul to tell these things. I do not have to know.

CELESTINE. I must tell you now. My father—he was worthless, and I hated him. My mother I never knew,—the cause of her death when I was a baby I have never had explained,—but I can guess she died of shame and grief, a victim of his brutalities. She had been on the stage. My father was anxious to train me for some such career. The dancing lessons are about my first recollection. He soon had me ready for public performance, and from then on he made my childhood miserable,—but very profitable to him. I would have liked the work if he had not brought out so clearly his intention of keeping me dependent by it, of making me support his own abandoned life. I did not have to be very old to understand all about that. His companions were the lowest in whatever city or town we happened to be. He always immediately found them—or they found him. He had no mercy on me. I might be tired from my performance, but any thought of my welfare,—sleep,—wholesome food,—wholesome air and companionship never occurred to him. I could

count myself lucky if some gambling game was started and I was permitted to go to bed. Otherwise, I might have to amuse the roisterers by repeating—perhaps several times—my performance of that afternoon or evening. Perhaps he would insist—— God! Those companions of his!

RAOUL. My poor little Celestine! What a childhood!

CELESTINE. Yes,—but childhood itself eases a multitude of oppressions. It was when I began to grow up that I realized and began really to suffer. Of course, in such a life I matured rapidly. At twelve my worldly wisdom would have shocked many at twenty. I knew, but somehow I always understood myself,—always managed to avoid the soiling touch of the life that was my father's—and hence, mine. My childish ambitions were intensely vivid—and oddly enough they reached out far beyond the only life I knew. To excel on the stage—to become a famous dancer meant to me only a more exacting effort, leading to more money for my father. I could see, too, that he had no real ambitions for me—was likely to drag me down with him. He was weak and short-sighted,—the years of pinching and desperately hard work that would have brought to us the bountiful reward of my genuine success he would never have endured. He was satisfied to let me drift

along as well as I might,—no practice, no care,—ready always for the day when he might arrange some more profitable degradation for me. And when that day came——

RAOUL. No, no, my Celestine—I don't want to hear——

CELESTINE. Wait! When he at last proposed—proved his utter baseness, I ran away. By lying and conniving in every possible way I had succeeded from time to time in saving a little from his gambling levies,—in all a rather large sum considering his watchfulness. Kind-hearted persons,—managers at the theatres and cabarets, understanding my position, often made it possible for me to keep some of the money I earned. I was nearly seventeen when I ran away from him,—I was determined to give up the dancing by which he would be certain to find me again. Of course, I was terribly afraid of him. My new aim was to go to a school; and by the most careful—often painful—good management I did succeed in getting two years of the sort of training I wanted so badly—at Lyons where I felt safely hidden away. I tried hard to market this education along with my considerable travelling experience,—and at twenty I secured what seemed an excellent position as travelling companion to the wife of a German officer.

RAOUL. The trap?

CELESTINE. Exactly! I see now how carefully the plan was made,—how carefully I was tried and inspected before being decided worth their while. We spent many happy months in Italy and Spain and southern France. Frau Von Erlein was travelling for her health,—though to me it seemed about as robust as any one could possibly wish. But I liked going about and I knew the Continent well enough after the years with my father. The husband I saw only twice,—and then his leave-of-absence was surprisingly short. Finally we returned to Berlin. I was urged to continue as companion,—new travels would soon begin. Then I was accused of theft—a large theft,—and the evidence against me was found to be so complete,—why even I almost began to suspect myself.

RAOUL. The rest is easy to guess.

CELESTINE. Of course. It must have worked many times,—kind words,—my youth,—no desire to prosecute on a first offense,—but still, prosecution, sure conviction, a prison term, unending disgrace,—or—an alternative. I was young, I felt the victim of an amazingly unlucky circumstance, I was adventurous. I accepted,—and the Wilhelmstrasse had another agent.

RAOUL. They took you up immediately?

CELESTINE. Oh, no, I was given meaningless,

petty jobs,—I was thoroughly tested—and then at last pronounced acceptable. I confess I enjoyed it. I was again to become of the stage,—my first assignment sent me to the Balkans,—Belgrade, Sofia, Bucharest. The thrill of the work intoxicated me. I was successful too,—was complimented,—and success seems somehow to justify anything—at the beginning. It never occurred to me that I might be sent to spy in my own Belgium, or in France. If it had—to be frank—perhaps the prospect would not have seemed so terrible from a distance. I was young,—I was afraid of conviction for theft,—I was afraid of being found by my father. My new work appealed to my youth, saved me from the conviction and from any possibility of my father's interference.

RAOUL. You told them about him?

CELESTINE. Yes,—and was at once assured he would not be permitted to annoy me or interfere with my work.

RAOUL. Then—they sent you to France—to Belgium?

CELESTINE. Not for some time. I was in Italy after the Balkan affair,—then Spain, England, America. At last in September of 1913 the order came,—*Brussels*. I begged to be let off—anywhere but Belgium or France,—both of them seemed like home to me. And

my combination of the two only seemed to anger them,—I could not understand that then.

RAOUL. They already had their war plans and they hated to hear even your merely verbal alliance of Belgium and France.

CELESTINE. Yes,—and they forced me to go to Brussels. The old threats terrified me, as usual. What a fool I was,—prison, anything would have been better than the life I gradually began to lead. I soon became so involved in their spying and plotting that I couldn't escape. In Belgrade at the very beginning of my career, a Rumanian—probably a secret agent too,—died suddenly and mysteriously,—murdered, of course. Now, when I tried to refuse to go into Belgium, they showed me the evidence in the case of that death. *I* was the murderer. It was horrible. My opposition was thus quickly broken down.

RAOUL. What was your mission in Belgium?

CELESTINE. Nothing very important—I was useful because I was a native of the country,—but they never really trusted me. They were right in that, for I was constantly plotting how I might make them transfer me to another country. The thought of what I was doing there in the city of my birth kept me in a constant fever of terror. And I did little enough,—secured general information regarding the army, its prep-

aration, and the public's sentiment—its choice as between France and Germany. There were times when it seemed as if I would have to shout out a terrible warning to the people. Though largely kept in the dark about the real operations going on all around me, I was able to realize how complete was the spy system there. I could see more and more clearly that some evil plan was being prepared that was to endanger my little Belgium.

RAOUL. It would have been no use to give such a warning from your position. Berlin would have immediately repudiated you, denied any such intention, protested its undying friendship for the government at Brussels and the people it governed—and redoubled its spying.

CELESTINE. I could not persuade myself as to that, however. When I went out in the streets I imagined that I was avoided, pointed out, denounced by gestures behind my back. It was terrible. And then my father turned up,—the same as ever, but with health beginning to break and without those few remaining shreds of a once attractive personality that had occasionally made him endurable in the days before I had escaped. This seemed my chance. I immediately reported that my usefulness in Belgium and France had ended with the appearance of my father. I again urged my transfer.

RAOUL. And your father—did he suspect your employment?

CELESTINE. Experienced in only one extreme of living, he, of course, questioned my means of livelihood,—but he never guessed right. For a fortnight I had to endure him, support him, endeavoring meanwhile to obey orders as I received them without arousing his further suspicion. I even had to encourage him to believe his prompt—and, I suppose, natural—interpretation of my position. And then one morning he was found dead. They had managed to remove my excellent excuse for leaving the locality where I was best fitted to serve in their plan. Moreover, it was again subtly indicated to me that his death—casually accepted as heart disease—could readily be proved against *me*—

RAOUL. The beasts!

CELESTINE. I despised him. He had never done anything to make me respect him as my father,—but nevertheless he was my father and to think that they—— Well, I determined to make one great effort to escape from my horrible position,—and then, if I failed—I would kill myself.

RAOUL. What a dear, brave heart you have!

CELESTINE. It was not brave—but it was not exactly cowardice, either. It was only another way out—a sure way,—relief from the

shame and terror of every day, day after day, with never an hour of repose, never an hour of feeling honorable again. I had learned fast in the service, and the tricks I had been taught I now turned against them. I went to Paris and disappeared—vanished—by their methods and tests I knew well, I was able to convince myself that they had lost sight of me. I prepared to go to South America—and then, the day before I was to leave, I had to make one brief daylight shopping excursion. It was not a woman's weakness—the lure of Paris,—it was necessary as I had come away with so little. Of course, I was discovered. Paris always swarmed with their spies. Gletzen, an agent with whom I had worked in Sofia and Bucharest,—I walked right into him. By the most desperate efforts I succeeded in losing him, but the meeting convinced me that life out in the world—no matter where—would be made intolerable by an unending fear of pursuit. By way of little travelled roads and in a most guarded and inconspicuous way, I went to a small convent that I knew of—Our Lady of St. Hilaire—near the Luxembourg frontier. There I at last felt safe—enrolled as a novice——

RAOUL. A *nun*?

CELESTINE. The invasion of Belgium came before that. I was still a novice when that

frightful moment of war arrived. My worst fears were realized. The vast scheme against Europe was ready. I had worked on the fringe of it and knew something of its completeness. I had escaped from the service of the Wilhelmstrasse chiefly because convinced *I* was being specially prepared for some terrible work,—and I knew the absolute lack of morality and human feeling that made their plans so terrible. My father's death simply added a last proof of the unscrupulousness I already knew through a hundred previous instances. At the convent, when I first arrived, I felt safe against all this,—but with the first rumor of war my terror mounted,—I was the only one there who really knew them. We were urged to be calm, to rest assured that no harm would befall our inoffensive and secluded little company. And then, almost before we knew it, their cavalry were swarming all around us.

RAOUL. You had no time to escape?

CELESTINE. We had plenty of time to escape—days even,—but the Mother Superior was a very old lady and those who advised her were silly, trusting fools.

RAOUL. There are always some to hinder,—some who insist it is possible to live safely in the midst of the worst fire or plague.

CELESTINE. Yes. And instead of our se-

cluded safety, the convent tower was the first thing that caught their eye,—a field wireless location,—perhaps selected months before. I was up in that tower when they invaded the convent, had been sent up there to ring the bell as an alarm. I knew that would do no real good and would only arouse the troops, so I didn't ring. The whole countryside seemed to be smoking—burning villages,—St. Hilaire, just below the convent, was in flames,—they claimed their troops had been fired on there, of course.

RAOUL. The old excuse—"You fired on us!" In Alsace and Lorraine they have the other—"You have spied on us!" With those two always ready at hand they can manage anything they please.

CELESTINE. I stayed up there in the tower numb with fright. Everything I had feared was coming true,—and all the while I knew the other haunting terror. How much had *I* done toward making possible this crushing of poor little Belgium?

RAOUL. Little enough you may be sure, dear heart.

CELESTINE. But even that little—— Well, I stayed up there. Below the foolish ones were protesting and making it worse. I could hear harsh commands, and the crashing of doors and furniture,—then screams—voices I recognized

and loved,—the younger sisters had been very kind to me. Next a heavy step on the stairs—and then on the ladder leading up to where I was. If I had been able to move I should have flung myself down from the tower,—but I could only stand there staring at the creaking, quivering top of that ladder. A burly trooper appeared, and then another. They had a wireless apparatus with them, were performing a duty, would perhaps not have dared to do me any harm. But I was too terrified to judge; I hardly recognized the wireless though I had often enough seen it used. The screaming still sounded and all around the smoke of the burning villages. I yielded to the one impulse—I gave them a signal of the Wilhelmstrasse. Its effect was electric,—from leering at my helplessness they instantly changed to apologetic servility. I gathered myself together, tried to encourage their ready belief that I had been signalling from the convent tower, was about to descend when an officer appeared. So I had to go through with it. They had me,—and a cowardly weakness, fear of death sent me back to the old service. Ever since that day I have been going through with it—have had no new chance to escape.

RAOUL. Ever since? My God! Here too?

CELESTINE. Yes,—even here. At first they sent me to Italy, then Bulgaria, Rumania,—as

one by one the wavering governments came into the war, the Wilhelmstrasse frantically shifted its operations. At last I was employed as a spy within the Empires—Budapest, Prague, Trieste,—wherever a growing anti-Prussian spirit was suspected. All this while I had but one determination,—to wait for a real opportunity to serve the Allies I had so long been employed against. I lost no chance to prove my fitness for any commission. Gradually I won their confidence—from being little more than a servant to the principal agents I became in time independent,—trusted,—even being permitted to know something of the purpose underlying my orders that I might work the more thoroughly. And I have been so thorough,—so efficient—bah! I thought I had them completely fooled——

RAOUL. *Thought?* And you find you haven't?

CELESTINE. Listen. I was to be sent to America,—then suddenly my orders were altered. Secret agents of the Allies are known to have worked into nearly every batch of exiles. Their ability to do much else but starve like the rest was arrogantly discounted, yet efficiency dictated that they be detected. And I was one of those detailed for the gruesome work. I thought it showed how much they trusted me, this sending me back into the midst of my suffering people.

RAOUL. You have served them.

CELESTINE. I have pretended to. Until to-day I thought I had them completely deceived.

RAOUL. And why not to-day?

CELESTINE. Old Phillipe——

RAOUL [*excitedly*]. You knew about *him*?

CELESTINE. Yes. And about others,—even about you.

RAOUL [*staring at her in horror*]. But old Phillipe? You knew he was not really old,—a wonderful disguise,—he was comparatively strong even with these privations——

CELESTINE [*suddenly understanding*]. Raoul! You don't believe—you are not saying that I—— Oh, Raoul—how can you?

RAOUL. Of course you wouldn't intentionally,—but how else did they know?

CELESTINE. That is it! They have not trusted me, or rather, they have begun to suspect my lack of result. There must be another spy here. Old Phillipe was undoubtedly poisoned,—I have seen it work before,—my father,—the same sudden collapse——

RAOUL. But who? God! Every word we have spoken may have been heard.

CELESTINE. I do not fear that. I have watched carefully. I cannot believe *I* am yet definitely suspected, for I have been warned. To-night—Franz who has always brought me

extra food did not appear. Then I heard that he, Franz, had been given five days in the guard-house for supplying extra food to "enemy aliens." That is so like them. They believe I am no longer useful here, and they pretend to desert me—give me a chance to share in the life a real exile leads. And as to this other spy,—there are no new arrivals. Perhaps Phillipe brought on his own detection by a too reckless, defiant manner? They may not have feared him as anything but a dangerous old insurgent. He overplayed that part, again and again I had all I could do to save him. And when he brought you here—he would have spread the news all over camp,—and you not only an escaped prisoner, but for years a valued agent for the French in Metz and Mülhausen.

RAOUL [*astonished*]. You even knew all about that?

CELESTINE. At once. A report about you went out everywhere. As one of a batch of prisoners your identity was safe, but when you attracted attention by escaping, then all that wonderful system went to work to look you up,—and it was soon discovered that you were one of those whose little store-house of information they had raided an hour too late the night before war was declared. Of course, Phillipe didn't know.

RAOUL. And you, dearest, had the double responsibility. You have been wonderful.

CELESTINE. I have tried to keep them supplied with matter that didn't count, reports of small infractions of the rules, and of harmless murmuring against the starvation and the slavery. Even these necessary appearances of faithful service have made me seem despicable to myself.

RAOUL. But look at the greater services to us you have been enabled to perform.

CELESTINE. Yes, but this sneaking, spying—— To-day I saw Margot hiding away a handful of roots and bulbs she was supposed to be planting. I knew they would not do her any good,—might even make her very sick in her present ill-nourished condition. So I reported her. Poor thing, I suppose they searched her in their brutal way. By now she must be used to any sort of personal indignity,—yet the thought of my dishonor, even in such a little thing, turns me sick with disgust.

RAOUL. But dear, your greater service——

CELESTINE. Raoul, it must come quickly now. My usefulness will soon be gone. They are relentless when they begin to suspect. Here I have been in the midst of plots and meetings and vital matters—and have not reported one of them. A newcomer would discover it in forty-

eight hours, for these poor, brave, determined people work so clumsily. I am surprised that the guards themselves have not discovered something is being arranged among them. And if they should? I have been so proud of their selecting me since I found it out,—I have so longed for this chance to redeem myself——

RAOUL [*taking her in his arms as she kneels by his side*]. You redeem yourself—you, who have saved us all? You are already redeemed a hundredfold!

DIALOGUE IV

DIALOGUE IV

Place. A dim interior. There is no light but that which trickles through the thin crack of the door. A figure may be discerned in this light, crouching on guard. Other forms sitting about are almost indistinguishable.

THE WATCHER AT THE DOOR. He is coming back.

VOICE ON THE RIGHT. Is he alone?

WATCHER. Yes. She is not with him.

A WOMAN'S VOICE. I knew she would not agree to it.

VOICE on the LEFT. Do not make up your mind too soon. She is brave. I am confident she will do as we suggest. Even without poor Phillipe——

VOICE [*right*]. Let us wait to hear. I too have confidence in her,—she will not fail us,—it is foolish to accuse her of cowardice when she has shown a hundred times——

WOMAN'S VOICE. I was not accusing her of cowardice. It takes bravery to refuse.

WATCHER. Be still now! He is here,—I must open the door.

[*The moonlit strip on the edge of the door widens and the figure of a man quickly enters. He sits, and the door is closed to its former position.*]

VOICE [*right*]. Well? You have talked with her?

THE MESSENGER. I have. She agrees. When I told her, she wept——

VOICE [*right*]. You explained the great danger. She wept from fear?

MESSENGER. She wept with *joy*,—so glad is she to be chosen to serve.

VOICE [*left*]. I knew it,—I knew it. She is one of the bravest women I have ever seen, and I have seen thousands of them since the war began.

A WOMAN'S VOICE. It is true. I said she was brave,—the bravest among us,—but there are reasons—I thought she would never consent.

MESSENGER. Well, she did—at once—and gladly.

VOICE [*right*]. Did you clearly explain our project? It is very important that she should accept knowing exactly what is expected of her.

MESSENGER. I did my best. I told her that we needed some one—some woman,—a *young* woman to become—acquainted in high places——

VOICE [*right*]. But why did you try to conceal our whole intention?

A NEW VOICE. Yes. She must know all.

It is not work every woman could undertake, however determined or brave. It will require a rare talent,—wit, genius. It requires that she be more than merely willing and intelligent.

MESSENGER. She understands all that. I could not tell her what you yourselves have not yet determined. Your plan is not complete yet.

NEW VOICE. It is nearly complete.

VOICE [*left*]. Certainly. We cannot reach the details. They will depend on her—and on circumstances.

VOICE [*right*]. Yes,—yes,—but let us proceed. It is hard enough after a weary day—and almost no food. We must not wear out our strength in a needless argument.

WOMAN'S VOICE. Did you explain to her that each of us will give up a portion of our rations to her?

MESSENGER. I told her. She said she would not need it. I even urged her, saying she must look well and be strong for her work.

NEW VOICE. She *must* understand that?

MESSENGER. She does. It is like fattening up a sacrifice, she said.

VOICE [*left*]. Then she feels bitter about it?

MESSENGER. I have told you that she wept with joy at our choosing her. She did not jest. She clearly understands that she must attract to

succeed. She said,—I think I can manage without making the others torture themselves with even less to eat than the little they now are given. And then she said,—I am better fitted for this work than you imagine. Tell them that,—tell them I shall prepare myself at once, that I will be ready whenever they are,—that I may even surprise them.

WOMAN'S VOICE. Surprise us? What does she mean? Could it be? Ah, no,—not that

VOICE [*right*]. Could it be what?

WOMAN'S VOICE. Nothing,—only a foolish idea of mine,—nothing at all——

VOICE [*right*]. Could it be what? Were you suggesting that she might be in the service of these beasts,—a German *spy*——

WOMAN'S VOICE [*weakly*]. I only thought it for a minute. It could not be so.

WATCHER. Anything might be so in these days,—in this place. How can we tell who serves them? Their spies have been everywhere,—why not here?

VOICE [*left*]. Enough! It is a chance we will have to take. No doubt there are spies here,—even among our number—but not little Celestine. I am an old man among you,—my judgment must be worth something. I will stake it on her. If this war can make a traitress of such as her then it may as well continue till all the world is gone.

VOICE [*right*]. Well said, Antoine.

WOMAN'S VOICE. Forgive me for suggesting it. The thought quickly passed and I was ashamed. [*Defensively.*] You forced me to tell you about it, you know?

MESSENGER. Yes,—yes,—it is over. We must go on with the plan. We are sure of her now. What more is there to be done?

VOICE [*right*]. We must do what we can to help her begin. It will not be easy for her to reach the Prince, you know.

VOICE [*left*]. And there is still the question,—is his assassination the most desirable accomplishment? He is known everywhere as a vain and weak sensualist. He will never be permitted to reign.

WATCHER. How do we know he does not, now?

VOICES. What? . . . How is that?

MESSENGER. What do you mean?

WATCHER. Is it not quite possible that the Kaiser is already dead—has been dead for weeks, and is only being kept alive publicly by these military leaders whose power and position is absolutely dependent on keeping up the old order of things?

VOICE [*right*]. That is all very well as a speculation, but I don't believe they could keep such a secret long. There are too many agents of the Allies in Germany.

WATCHER. What difference would that make? Nearly the whole world is leagued against Germany. Suppose it was announced that the sick old man at Potsdam had died,—the devil and his chief registrar might swear to it, but from the Wilhelmstrasse there would only need to come their usual denial, their usual vaporings about the distortions of the Allied news agencies.

VOICE [*right*]. Well, dead or alive—we know he is dying. The Prince is next, and far worse. He is the last hope of the military party. If he is out of the way, a child is left to succeed him. There would probably be a regency,—one of the five other sons. Such a government would not last six months in Germany,—everything would become disorganized under it. We would have accomplished something quite worth while for our cause.

WOMAN'S VOICE. It is hard to understand, but of course you know. You have studied and read,—you can see better the things that are to be.

NEW VOICE. He is right. It must be the Prince. He is hated, but he is necessary to their powerful military party.

VOICE [*left*]. The whole war is due to him and his group. The Kaiser was satisfied with the pomp and array of his military establishment. It was this younger generation of butchers who

were so anxious to see how far their great guns would shoot.

VOICE [*right*]. Well, they know well enough now. They have carried clear around the world, and now back into Germany again.

WATCHER. This great revolution in Russia has as completely assassinated Frederick William and his chance of succession as any plan of ours could. He will never succeed. Like Antoine, I still am not convinced he is our best target. Now one of these great generals,—a Hindenburg or Ludendorf,—

VOICE [*right*]. Russia and Germany are not to be compared. The Russian people were waiting for their chance,—most of Germany will have to be beaten into accepting it. These Germans say—and it is probably a great exaggeration—that four thousand were killed in the revolution in Russia. Well, this whole war is the *German revolution*. Millions have died, are still dying,—all the nations of the earth are supplying its awful demand,—and it is not ended yet. I tell you our plan must not be changed now. Let it be the Prince who goes now. It is not merely the man we are doing away with,—we pull down a figure, one who stands for something high and mighty. The imagination of ten geniuses could not conceive a more fitting portrait for all that is bad in Germany, and in the German than this



bestial Fritz. To strike him down,—I see it clearly as our great opportunity.

WOMAN'S VOICE. He is right, can't you see? It *is* our great opportunity. The Prince's headquarters are to be moved near here, the fields we are planting are for him—it will be easy for her to reach him.

VOICE [*left*]. That is something,—his moving near here.

WATCHER. Well, I agree. We are only a few, we must do whatever we can and be grateful of the opportunity. Not many of us are going to live to see the end of this. But it will help if we are able to go knowing that the end is brought a little nearer through our effort.

VOICE [*right*]. It is agreed then?

VOICES. It is.

VOICE [*right*]. Then we must consider how we can help her. Remember, little Celestine is really to do it all. We speak of our service. Our plan is nothing,—it is her deed that will work so much good.

MESSENGER. Our plan *is* something. She said it herself. She said she cannot make plans, that she would have done something like this long ago if she could have thought it all out.

WOMAN'S VOICE. Does she mean that she gets confused?

MESSENGER. She meant just what I say.

Not every one can plan such an act unaided. There have been a dozen of us, and we have discussed and argued. She will be dependable enough when she is shown what to do.

WOMAN'S VOICE. But it has been agreed the details must be left to her. If she cannot plan——

VOICE [*right*]. Details are inspiration. Planning is judgment and foresight. She has said she would surprise us, that she is better prepared for this service than we think. If she can act well——

VOICE [*left*]. She may have been on the stage—an actress?

WOMAN'S VOICE. Listen. I will tell you something none seems to know. She is far enough from the stage,—she was in a convent.

VOICES. A sister?

WOMAN'S VOICE. A novice.

VOICE [*right*]. Does that alter her service in any way? The deed we plan is heroic, is great. We don't blaspheme like a Boche. We don't say *we* are the hand of God. But who can doubt that any act which will help to bring the right sort of peace to the world is not a worthy,—a *holy* act?

WOMAN'S VOICE. But the nature of our plan? How can we hope she will be able to win her way to the presence of the Prince? It is not

usual to seek among her kind for one—one—who can—who will——

VOICE [*right*]. You mean—that we are depending on her to succeed by the artful fascinations of the courtesan?

WOMAN'S VOICE. Yes, I meant that. We all know it is the only way she can succeed with the Prince.

VOICE [*left*]. She is a woman. She will go forth fired with a great impulse,—a mighty project. I tell you—she will succeed. Her woman's instinct will guide her.

WATCHER. You have great confidence—yet this point is a vital one. If we are not positive as to her fitness, can we not rearrange our plan in some way?

VOICE [*right*]. To attempt to do so now will not only rearrange but ruin it. It would be folly to make such an attempt. We can only go on. By a fateful coincidence the Prince is delivered into our hands. The day we determined to strike some blow, however small, for the cause of the civilized world—that very day it became known to old Phillipe that the Prince was soon to make his headquarters near here. We are being slowly starved to death. Disease is shrinking our number each day. Our leader, our chief advisor—Phillipe—to-day in the fields——

A VOICE. Yes,—yes,—he was so clever. We need him.

VOICE [*right*]. We do need him, but we must keep on with the plan he helped us work out,—we must not disregard the wisdom he put into that. This Prince is the puppet on whom the powerful military leaders depend. When we do away with him, we are robbing them of the instrument of their injustice. The government will be shaken. You will soon see the grand collapse. You will see how the rats scurry from a foundering ship of state. We have suffered here, we know Germany as those outside can never know it, and so we must do our best to prevent a world-blunder. We on whom the German power has riveted a grip of iron death,—we must do our best to wreck this tottering power. The Allies must never deal with it. It must be wiped out. The lion was grateful to the hunter who removed the cruel thorn, but in the Prussian beast there is nothing of the lion. From the highest to the lowest we have seen how they despoil and trick and play the hypocrite. If after peace comes there is left one fragment of this mighty war machine that would have ground half of Europe into bloody pulp,—then all of this may happen over again, and other generations will have to suffer as we are suffering. There are many

here in Germany who would strike as we mean to strike, but dare not even think of it. They are cowed, disorganized, confronted by the army—even though that army is but Germany in uniform. We who have nothing to lose—who can know no punishment more dreadful than that which we suffer every day,—*we* must strike the first blow,—show them the way. The army is dependent on its officers,—it cannot revolt. Those officers must go. We must begin against them at the very top.

VOICE [*left*]. But the thing we are fighting is more than human. Who are we to hope to begin the internal destruction of their dreadful system? There are still hundreds of officers, thousands still to fight for the old power. It is something more than a little group of men. It is a great hideous monster that all obey here in Germany according to their position. You know that even the Kaiser cannot raise a man from the ranks of the army.

VOICE [*right*]. You think then we can work no real advantage? That our risk will not amount to anything after all, Antoine?

VOICE [*left*]. I did not say it. I feel that we are so weak, so bound,—earnest and brave, yes,—but so pitifully few. We have no authority. Even at this moment, we prove our weakness by admitting how uncertain our plan still is.

We really have no plan. I believe Celestine will succeed, but it will not be through our management. What can we really do for her?

MESSENGER. We have originated the plan. She is grateful for that. She is anxious and able to serve, but she needs guidance.

VOICE [*left*]. Well, then we have done that. We have given her stimulus. We have shown her the way to serve. Her success will always be hers, though. To that what can we hope to contribute?

VOICE [*right*]. We will help her to escape?

VOICE [*left*]. How?

VOICE [*right*]. It will be arranged. We will create a disturbance, distract these old Landsturm guards,—they'll come running, furious at being disturbed in the night and then she will get away.

VOICE [*left*]. We will more likely get her shot.

VOICE [*right*]. Antoine, why have you so suddenly changed in your attitude toward our plan? You were anxious to have it tried,—you were one of the foremost among us in arranging the plan,—why you seconded Phillipe—

VOICE [*left*]. Yes,—seconded *Phillipe*. But now Phillipe is gone. And as I have been sitting here, it has come to me that our plan has gone with him—our plan and its hope of success. I confess a strange and sudden foreboding is

rising up within my breast, stifling me. We now seem to be leaderless. When we began to-night we had only a few minor details to discuss. Since then we have seemed to work backward,—to unwind the chain he made so carefully, link by link. I feel uneasy, unsettled, stifled. We are beaten before we begin—without him.

VOICE [*right*]. That is absurd. We did depend on him, it is true, but not as you make it seem. He was wise and clever—he knew more about these things than some of us, but after all this plan is not complex,—it is wonderfully simple——

VOICE [*left*]. Yes, simple to talk about,—but hardly simple to execute. It is easy for us to say—here is our plan, little Celestine. You have lived for weeks here with us, ill-nourished, over-worked, without sufficient clothing for mere warmth, with no chance to escape the filth of this vile camp life. But our plan is *simple*. You merely make yourself attractive,—you escape from this camp,—you win your way into the household of the Prince,—you win the Prince,—and then, your enchantment successful,—you complete our simple plan,—you kill the Prince. That is all there is to it. We, of course, will help you. We will perhaps make it easier for you to escape from the camp,—or perhaps make it the more difficult. We will do our best. Beyond

that you will have to work alone. Once away from the camp it is only a question of details—and we leave them to you.

WOMAN'S VOICE. I said it was too much for her.

VOICE [*right*]. Antoine, you are clever,—it is easy to be clever with sarcasm, but it is also as easy to be absurd. You yourself this very evening have declared how capable Celestine is. She speaks German like a native tongue. She was only a novice at the convent. What of the years before that? She is clever and experienced, I tell you,—and to her—even without our weak help—our plan *will* be easy.

VOICE [*left*]. But that plan—what is it really but an idea? Phillipe was constructive. He would have gone with her from the camp—he would have managed it somehow, you know he would. He would have helped her to win her way, gone with her to the Prince's headquarters, to the very door of his bedroom if need be. He was old, our Phillipe, but his spirit was that of a young man. He never seemed old except in appearance. He led us with the enthusiasm of a boy. We were starving drudges, hardly daring to protest against petty abuse—and then he aroused us to an achievement that would reach in its effect far beyond this slave hole.

VOICE [*right*]. We all admit these things. For his sake, I say, we *must* go on with it.

WATCHER. He would not have wanted us to fail him, Antoine.

VOICE [*left*]. You are right in that, but he would not have wanted the plan tried in such a way that it would surely fail. He would not have wanted Celestine sacrificed.

MESSENGER. She will not consider herself sacrificed. I am sure of that. I have talked with her.

WOMAN'S VOICE. Why didn't she come with you and talk with us?

MESSENGER. She said our greatest safety would lie in not seeming to be preparing any move, in not being noticed together, in attracting no attention. She said she wanted time to think—to make her own partial plan. She would be ready whenever we needed her.

VOICE [*left*]. Don't you see? She too understands as did old Phillipe. We wanted her here, but she does not come, knowing well enough that two may be detected where one can go about in safety. We would sit and talk here for hours. Phillipe never permitted a long or a large meeting. He never wanted to have meetings at all. He knew the ways of secret preparation. He was as skillful as a secret service agent. Indeed, we do not know of his youth. He may have been one.

VOICE [*right*]. You take up as much time speaking as any.

VOICE [*left*]. I admit it. I make no claims to a rare wisdom in these things. We are all weary and hungry. And we are clumsy and careless. If there had been a spy here in the camp we should have given ourselves away to him at once.

VOICE [*right*]. Our concern ought not to be about ourselves but about the plan. If we haven't given it away, are we to give it up? Celestine is anxious to serve the cause. I grant that we lack Phillipe's help, but are we to fail miserably and rob him of the great blow he planned so carefully? I say, let us not meet again. Antoine and I will help her as much as we can. Each of us is to give up a little to add to her ration. She must be as strong as possible when she sets out. All will be kept informed, all will be expected to help as they can. We can only try to do our best. The rest will depend on her.

VOICE [*left*]. We must consider her the leader.

VOICE [*right*]. In a way, yes. Is it agreed?

VOICES. It is agreed.

WATCHER. Be careful now as you go out. One must go at a time, crouch low,—there must be no noise, no hurry.

VOICE [*wearily*]. Has any one the strength to dare to hurry?

DIALOGUE V

DIALOGUE V

Place. A council room.

Persons. Around a large table littered with papers sit four German officers of high rank.

VON A. What about this last report from Hamburg?

VON B. It looks grave. Worst of all—it has become generally known throughout the empire.

VON C. Were there so many people killed?

VON D. Nearly two hundred.

VON C. That is bad, very bad—what is to be done about it?

VON A. About the people? Why, nothing—they can be thankful they were only shot. I have not time to bother about rioters. They get what they deserve.

VON C. Those who riot because they are hungry are not like ordinary rioters.

VON B. Rioting at a time like this is the worst sort of treason. We must crush it without waste of time or pity. These mobs are doing us the utmost possible harm. They encourage our enemies.

VON A. We at least can be frank with each other. What additional encouragement do the Allies need? They are winning on every side,—that is surely enough.

VON B. Well, I never admit it even to myself. My staff might read it in my eyes. As soon as one begins to admit such things, they become reality.

VON C. This advance of the Allies is not due to any state of mind on our side. It is due to *their* state of mind. We have got to begin to admit these things. Our game is just about played out.

VON D. There are a few cards left.

VON A. We cannot find much relief in a few cards. We need several entirely new decks.

VON C. And we need to get them from the Allies.

VON B. I must confess I cannot see any need of making a joke of it. That is the way these damned English do. When they are being beaten on four fronts they act like overwhelming victors. It is not until everything is going their way that they begin to see dark days ahead.

VON A. We could hold out well enough against the whole yelping pack if these fools in the towns and cities would not try to tie our hands every day. These democracy howlers, these rioters——

VON D. There was one alarming feature in this trouble at Hamburg yesterday.

VON B. The whole affair is alarming.

VON D. But wait! Only the soldiers had fire-arms. The people were not able to fire a shot—and yet nine officers received bullet wounds,—three shot dead.

VON A. You have, of course, had them looked up.

VON D. Yes. It was no accident. They were all unpopular according to the reports received.

VON C. It is certainly very bad.

VON B. Yes,—very! . . . What does the Prince say?

VON D. He seemed rather concerned at first. It sobered him up completely—for a minute. [*With an unconcealed sneer.*] However,—I left him repairing that condition produced by my announcement as rapidly as possible.

VON A. [*hotly*]. What is the matter with this family? The first William was worth two of the second, and now this——

VON B. Treason won't help matters—do you think?

VON A. *Treason*? Bah! Is it treason to admit the handicap of this degenerate? What about his latest fair captive?

VON D. He cast her off in one of his insane fits.

VON C. Was she seriously hurt?

VON D. [*ironically*]. Strange to say—hardly hurt at all. She was scared to death,—that’s all. She thought enough of Germany, or of decency, or of him,—or perhaps of her own permanent tenure to try to get him to drink less,—refused to drink with him and all that.

VON B. A fine way to win permanence with him, eh?

VON D. Yes,—he immediately blew up,—a terrible explosion of that cruel, sensual rage of his. He declared she was trying to kill him——

VON C. God help any one he suspects of that. I wonder she escaped as you say.

VON D. He would have strangled her, but he fell,—she managed to get a window open and climb out on the balcony. Two of his staff helped her down,—thinly—*very* thinly clad.

VON A. A compensation of staff duty?

VON D. His staff hardly notice such compensations,—it is the whole business of war to them. After all these months you might as well expect artillerymen to wonder at the thunder of their battery.

VON B. I don’t envy them. He’s had enough of his own kind around, and besides, some real soldiers have had to be sacrificed because he insisted on surrounding himself with their merit. And then there is always this forgiveness—I sup-

pose the lady of the miraculous balcony has been duly forgiven with maudlin tears, and disposed of as usual?

VON D. Oh, of course. Von Rhaele is the dubiously honored recipient this time.

VON C. I think we had better end this discussion. There is a more serious matter——

VON B. I am not jesting when I say I regard this as the most serious matter confronting us to-day. This man is the *Heir*. And soon we shall have to look to him. Our campaigns in this war have been hindered again and again by the deference which the skillful leaders had to show him. He has been, is, and will be our greatest weakness.

VON A. Let us not begin to whine about our weaknesses until we have no more strength.

VON B. We have little enough now.

VON A. Nonsense. We are being beaten it is true, but there is many a way out for us yet.

VON B. Well, I am ready to hear about these many ways.

VON D. And I.

VON A. [*scornfully*]. I never thought German leaders would be so easily defeated.

VON D. [*hotly*]. Easily defeated? God! Are we *easily* defeated? The whole world has been aroused against us——

VON A. Tricked and leagued against us, you mean.

VON D. I said "*aroused.*" We are beaten by the sanity of Europe.

VON A. But what of the sanity of Germany? That is our chief present concern.

VON C. You mean *we* will be overthrown by that? *Democracy*?

VON A. That is it,—Democracy. After all these years of preparation—and then this end. We will be the joke of history.

VON C. History will not joke about anything so terrible. The waste of this war is not going to brighten many pages. Our hope of redemption, as I see it, is in a fair and immediate admission of defeat.

VON B. Then we *are* done for. Once we admit——

VON D. We have gone too far to admit anything. We must stand to the last. We are bankrupt in fortune, in military prestige—but not in honor——

VON C. This sort of talk, as if preparing a public statement, is absurd. We waste our own time. At least, let us be candid with each other. In the eyes of the world we were bankrupt first in honor——

VON D. In the eyes of the world that read the news sent out by the British,—yes.

VON C. That cry will not be available much longer, either. I tell you we must begin anew if anything is to be saved. Our old methods have proved utterly worthless.

VON B. Our methods were sure enough. We have been beaten by luck. First,—the Belgians—damn 'em——

VON C. Well, they paid heavily enough——

VON D. Not half heavily enough. They caused the first break in our plans. We should have driven through to the Atlantic Ocean—to South America—anywhere—but for the delay they caused at the start——

VON A. Every one exaggerates that.

VON C. It was the Marne battle that turned the campaign upside down——

VON B. [*sharply*]. We have never admitted a Marne battle.

VON C. That is why no one cares now what we admit. Our diplomacy and news bureaus are the colossal blunders of this whole great series of blunders. I force myself to consider it frankly and fairly. We have literally beaten ourselves at every turn——

VON A. You are morbid. We have been surrounded by overwhelming odds.

VON C. Yes, overwhelming odds that we painstakingly accumulated against ourselves.

VON B. They had the greater efficiency.

VON C. The need for which we were most particular to teach them.

VON D. It was not these factors that brought on defeat. We were beaten from the beginning. They had God!

VON C. Yes,—at the very beginning we *gave* them God. The day we marched into Belgium——

VON B. Oh, Belgium,—Belgium,—I am so deadly sick of that name. I wish it could be forever stricken from the vocabulary of man.

VON D. [*sardonically*]. Who can say we did not try?

VON C. And there again you see the completely faulty method. Instead of helping the world to forget our initial wrong against Belgium, we keep on terrorizing them and never let the world forget their “bravery” for a moment——

VON B. You are getting sentimental. No wonder we are beaten.

VON A. Exactly. Germany is beaten from within. I am disgusted with this rehearsal of so-called mistakes. What about our many triumphs?

VON C. Such as?

VON A. Yes,—*triumphs*,—such as our months of domination of the Russian power. Allenstein? Tannenberg? What of our Balkan campaign,—our winning of Bulgaria,—the crushing

of Servia—and of Rumania? What do you say to Rumania?

VON C. We should never have managed it if our influence at the Russian court had not taken its last trick. The Rumanians counted on Russian assistance. If they had not, they could have held us back—if they had received any sort of real assistance at the right moment and in the right place they would have beaten us back. My whole point is that we failed because we depended entirely on such trickery. Italy, the United States, South America—we never held off any one of them for a day when they were finally provoked and ready. You speak of the luck of the Allies. It is something more than luck. We couldn't trick them into giving us the peace that would have really been our ultimate victory. Even the pacifists we richly subsidized couldn't distract them. Russia not only survived our open propaganda, but also withstood the dangers of our more subtle attacks through the extremists.

VON A. History will certainly say we did much for Russia.

VON B. [*sarcastically*]. How pitiful we must be in our decline? You worry about the judgment of history as if it casts a vote in the Reichstag.

VON D. There is nothing left to worry about.

I also like to think that future generations will not be too biased to recognize all that Kultur has done.

VON B. They are likely to be just,—they will not have to view our achievements through so much powder smoke.

VON C. But you hardly expect them to believe we did all this for them?

VON A. Oh, it is easy to criticize. Why not present something constructive. We can manage well enough yet if this internal problem can be controlled.

VON D. That means the discovery of a new food.

VON A. Yes,—a new food for thought. I say we need only to create a diversion.

VON B. You mean to compete with the growing favor of democracy, eh?

VON A. That is precisely it. It is our only hope. The Allies have not quite beaten us yet.

VON B. But their factory wheels go grinding on—grinding—grinding. What chance have we in the end?

VON A. Our chance is dissension. They are human,—that means, many different ideas, motives, aims, national characters. We must take all these matters into account, weigh them carefully,—we shall quickly enough find our advantage——

VON C. We have failed often enough trying to start dissension among them. We haven't yet tricked Russia into a separate peace. [*Sarcastically.*] And we *can't* bestow Texas again!

VON A. How you glory in our errors!

VON C. I don't mean to,—but I insist on an entirely new basis of procedure. We have been dull and near-sighted and insular. To us there was no other nation of the first class in all the world but ourselves. How wrong we were has been proven to us through many bitter months. I will not subscribe to any new plan that uses an old model.

VON A. Then listen to what I am proposing. You have urged frankness,—I urge it too. Let us admit that our chief concern at present need not be for Germany. The people will survive. We have to consider ourselves. We are facing a collapse of our power.

VON D. That would not be true if there was some one to stand for that power strong enough to continue also to stand for Germany.

VON A. That is it! But there is no one. Therefore, we must create him,—or it.

VON B. And what of the Prince?

VON C. Worthless as he is, he cannot be set aside lightly at this time.

VON A. He is not to be set aside lightly. He is to be a central figure. William has not much

longer to endure. We have successfully concealed the mortal nature of his illness. We have even made plans to cover up his death,—but under the circumstances of my proposal—his death will not weaken us at all. He will, in fact, die in obscurity.

VON D. What is this remarkable proposal?

VON A. I can understand how you regard it. You think I am attempting too much. But wait! The war long ago settled down to a consistent struggle between our power and the democratic idea. You will concede that?

VON D. Certainly.

VON A. Well, you will then admit that *we* stand no chance of securing any sort of terms from these democratic idealists. They have come out openly to crush us. The German people likewise will suffer more severe terms if peace is concluded with us.

VON D. It is reasonable to think so.

VON A. [*significantly*]. But a democratic Germany would have to be welcomed by her enemies, eh? Such of our enemies as France, Belgium, England, Servia, Rumania,—they might want harsh terms. They have fought us longest, have known the weight of our power. But the new spirit in Russia, the fixed aims of Italy,—and then all these later enemies who are fighting chiefly from pride, or to be on the winning side,—

these nations will vote to make our burden light once their own immediate and narrow aims are satisfied. Now if *we* remain in power, the first group will have its way. Germany will be shackled where there is very little breeze to flutter an imperial ensign. But in justice to the liberalizing spirit with which they smugly claim to be fighting us, all the Allies would be *bound* to deal gently with a newly democratized and liberalized Germany.

VON D. I have been patient—but I must confess I fail to see what new thought you are presenting.

VON A. I have not presented it yet. Now I will——

[The entrance of an orderly interrupts him.]

The orderly comes forward obsequiously and presents a folded paper.]

The report? Very well. Now we can proceed in earnest.

[The orderly quietly departs.]

What I am suggesting is, briefly, that *we* democratize Germany before the really democratic influences within the empire have a chance to organize.

VON C. You are not serious?

VON A. I am certainly not joking by the hour.

VON C. But—but—we—why, how could we

even claim to do such a thing, much less accomplish it.

VON B. We still have the army, and the army is everything to us.

VON D. But what of the army we have in the prison camps of the Allies? It is easy to imagine how these democracy mad idiots have been working among them. The Russian revolution got its first really rational impulse from the democratic propaganda among the Russian war prisoners in Japan.

VON C. Can't you see how hopeless the whole situation is? We have simply got to make the best terms possible by surrender. Take this question of prisoners. Look how our prisoners are treated by the Allies. When they return to Germany at the close of the war they will be the healthiest and best nourished in the empire. And what of the prisoners we have? Do you think the Allies won't understand the game we have played. They return us thousands in the best of condition,—an army fit to begin the colossal task of reconstruction. And we, on our part—such as we do return,—starved, incurably diseased——

VON B. Shut up, can't you? You're making us all as morbid and weak as you are.

VON C. I can't help it. The whole question of our power, the way we have used it, the way

we seek selfishly to preserve it,—it all sickens me. We have played the beast,—we deserve whatever they force upon us in our defeat.

VON A. [*boldly*]. No doubt. We deserve it and if we are defeated we will get it, never fear as to that. You will not be deprived of the classic wreath of martyrdom. [*Defiantly.*] But you are in this with us. You have got to stand with us and help with the plan of the majority.

VON C. [*wearily*]. Well, go ahead,—let us have your plan of the majority. I will yield to it. You are right. We can only stand together—after all this——

VON D. [*with some show of kindness*]. Come,—come,—our position is not so bad. There is more than one chance to pull out. We have a few more tricks left in the magician's cabinet. Remember how weary and exhausted the enemy is.

VON C. But victory absorbs so much weariness and exhaustion. That is our principal weakness,—lack of a real victory—when we had prepared for nothing else. But enough of that——

VON A. I think so. We'll never reach any success by sifting cold ashes. My plan will give us the greatest victory of all, for it will mean the victory *after* the war,—the victory of peace,—commercial possibility,—a quick overcoming

of the handicap of this great alliance against us. If we actually control the government, does it matter what it is called? For the first time in history——

VON D. Is this historical, too?

VON A. For the first time in history there will come forward a properly organized democracy. Even our sharpest critics admit we have genius for organization. Democracies are inefficient. We will create the first efficient one. This idea of government by the people is inherently absurd and enervating. A democratic government controlled by the whole nation with all its variety of caste and ability and opportunity and ambition,—why it is the most insane proposition ever conceived by man. There is not one *real* democracy on earth. A few are bound to control the mass,—it is inevitable.

VON B. It is certainly true among our enemies.

VON A. Of course it is. The truly democratic plan cannot be worked in anything but a small community. We will have that. We already have the best internal organization,—even our enemies agree on that. We will give the people a communal democracy, but the great general government,—the centralized power,—the government of international affairs—that will be *our* government.

VON D. You mean we will not really change at all?

VON A. We will really change enormously,—that is how we will be enabled to astonish and impose on all the world. The upheaval in Germany will completely deceive every one because it will be so tremendous. They will be compelled to admit that, true to the German characteristic, we did it thoroughly when we finally had to. For forty years we succeeded with the most transparent deceptions. We built up our huge war machine under their very eyes, books were written explaining thoroughly our plan of campaign—and yet how few took warning,—how unprepared and innocent they were. We said we were commercial, we sought only commercial advantages—we were not war-like,—and so they admired the great Krupp plant at Essen and actually believed it but another of our advanced *commercial* enterprises.

VON C. And now you believe we can do it all over again?

VON D. We certainly can.

VON A. I know we can. It will be too easy,—but we must plan it properly now and arouse no suspicion. We will not appear at all in this change. It must come wholly from the Prince.

VON D. The Prince? You think *he* would ever consent?

VON A. He can be made to consent. We must have many figureheads. Our reforms are to seem the greatest of this reform-crazed age. In five years, we will have them studying us,—lauding our system again, copying *our* liberalism. In ten years we will have recovered our place. We will present a solid front. Our people lend themselves more readily to such a plan than any other. They thrive on a national enterprise and ambition. We have worked them up once to strive for the enterprise and ambition of our class—a mere fraction of the empire——

VON C. About a twelfth.

VON D. The inner twelfth.

VON A. Yes,—the inner twelfth. But now that method is obsolete. We must have a democracy of the whole—of all twelve twelfths striving for twelve twelfths. Is it not a colossal plan?

VON B. I can hardly imagine it so suddenly.

VON D. It is enormous!

VON C. As I understand it, you are not really won to the democratic idea, but you see its advantages.

VON A. You have stated it exactly. I do see its advantages. Democracy wins in the end because it fights for a universal objective. In this war we were successful as long as our troops

believed they were fighting for themselves. It was only when they at last began to understand how little benefit to Germany would be a victory of our German power, that they weakened.

VON D. But how to bring about your plan of democracy?

VON A. Imagine the new Germany as I plan it. Think what a thunderbolt, what a solid, perfected efficiency we will have in a Germany of equals. Don't you see it?

VON B. You don't expect to have an army of officers?

VON A. Yes. In a way I do. This war has shown the mechanical future of war——

VON C. It has shown there can be no future for war.

VON A. Silly idealism! War is necessary to mankind—and even if it is not necessary—it is inevitable among groups of human beings.

VON C. Well?

VON A. I was saying that this war has shown the mechanical future of war. It has been fought with vast numbers of men—the greatest armies ever assembled—but it has not been won by these armies. It has been won by machinery.

VON D. It is not yet won, however.

VON C. For the sake of our own souls we had better begin to assume that it is.



VON A. Never mind. I say machinery has won the war. That means individuals have won it,—the observers in the aeroplanes,—the artilleryman who sights the gun,—the individuals who designed, constructed, and tested the aeroplane and the gun. Our old mass fighting should have ended at Verdun. War is now on a basis of artillery power. We accept this,—we must come to it with vision. Some one—I think it was our own German philosopher, *Pascal*, who said: “To foresee is to rule.” We missed this once,—but we have shown ourselves the way. We will not miss it again.

VON B. You think that a communal organization of our people will weld them into an all-conquering mass?

VON A. I know it!

VON B. But where do we survive in this?

VON A. Is there a democracy in all this world-welter of democracies to-day that has not its ruling powers? There must be leaders. We go to extremes—it is a national characteristic. We are weakest in a military sense in one generation and the strongest two generations later. We are either the most servile or the most arrogant—the mildest, the most aesthetic—or the most materialistic and cruel. We have had a government of iron. Now we will have a nation of iron. Government and people are bankrupt.

Frugality, simplicity, economy, efficiency,—no splendor, no wasteful idleness, or amusement seeking—these will make up our post-bellum philosophy. In such a national state of mind you can easily perceive how appealing my program will be?

VON D. But how can we accustom ourselves to a form of government we believe fundamentally wrong?

VON C. We don't believe it fundamentally wrong. This war has shown it to be completely and essentially right.

VON A. And since we cannot escape it, we wisely yield, eh? We are reformed. We abjectly look to the rest of the world for guidance. From the most autocratic we suddenly change to the most democratic. We shame our so-called democratic opponents. It will delight our people. "*To foresee is to rule.*" We will foresee, so we are bound to rule. We will be the new leaders,—the capitalists,—and in the sort of communal state we shall originate, our power will be ten times that of the French or British or American capitalists. We will not be seeking mere wealth. Our purpose will not show until we are ready,—until Germany has recovered,—until the present children are sturdy, intelligent individuals,—men and women,—each a particular working part in our great new machine of the state.

VON D. That is not new with us really.

VON A. It will be new to have the state *their* state. The war has opened their eyes. They will never fight for the ambitions of others again. I know our people—I know their temperament. They thrive on rules and regulations. An officialdom in which all may be officials will delight them.

VON B. It is certainly a marvelous plan. These who howl for communal government never really realize what it means,—the absolute absorption of the individual in the state. What autocracy can excel that?

VON A. [*jubilantly*]. Now you are understanding me! We know what this sort of thing really is,—we will be skillful and successful in its leadership.

VON C. We failed miserably this time because we aroused the world against us. You think the world would not arise against a people as it has against a Government?

VON A. Why even as it was, the sentimentalists, the idealists, the pacifists, the internationalists—all that motley crew hindered the gathering strength of the Allies at every turn. Their cries and claims were worth ten army corps to us during the first thirty months of war. And now picture a similar situation in years to come. Some who can perceive a danger even below the

horizon—the heirs of those who cried out for preparedness against us in the first decade of this century—these will again come forward with the alarm. But the idealists—the sentimentalists—the kindly ones—what will they say? [*With elaborate irony.*] “Injustice! Oppression! Wicked hatred of a reformed, repentant people, —a people so notably *peaceable and thrifty.*” They will say we are too poor, too terribly burdened with debt to seek another conflict,—never realizing that war, after all, is a thing of the spirit and not of the purse,—not even to-day. Our very debts—the superlative burden will drive us into another conflict. We should never have planned the first war without expectation of full indemnity. Without it we can stagger along only for a few years—a decade perhaps, and then collapse. The burden will be too great for any government—the old reorganized, or one that is wholly new. We will be bound to seek relief.

VON B. But how do you propose to work out this plan of yours?

VON A. First there is the Prince.

VON D. We will have to dispose of him, eh?

VON A. We will only have to control him. He is to lead the revolution. He is to come forward as the new partisan of a democratic Germany.

VON C. That is plainly impossible.

VON B. No one would ever believe him actually converted?

VON A. They will never believe in him,—and that is our chief desire.

VON D. You are too complex. Simplicity is the cornerstone of any new political structure. I would not want to command artillery that fired contrary to the laws of gravity, however wonderful it might be as an idea.

VON A. My plan exactly follows the laws of gravity—and of human nature. It is the first German plan that takes into account our enemies as they really are. That is why it will succeed. Under-estimation of everything but our own strength has been our singular and consistent handicap for years.

VON B. But the Prince?

VON A. We must control him absolutely.

VON C. [*ironically*]. That makes your plan very simple.

VON A. We will control him by his own folly. He is weak,—a degenerate and a coward. His next fair captive is to be of our choosing. She is already on her way here. She is a Belgian—has been in our secret service—has attempted to betray us. That gives us a firm hold on her, and then through her we shall secure our hold on him.

VON C. You consider it absolutely necessary to work—this way?

VON A. Absolutely. You know him as well as I. We have got to let him feel something of this "ruthless coercion" he is so fond of thinking he applies to others.

VON D. And when he has come forward as the leader of the democratic movement, and has been cried down—then—— We?

VON A. We begin even before then. We help cry him down. We refuse to submit to his act of treason,—treason to the present government,—to his father if he is still living,—treason to the people. Our rôle will be that of the anti-hypocrite—we scorn to dissemble. We have played and lost. We believe in a new government for Germany. We place ourselves and our experience as organizers at the disposal of the new government. We will serve as long as we are considered useful—but, of course, what we *really* seek is rest, seclusion, retirement——

VON B. You are wonderful.

VON A. I believe in winning. If a mistake is made and success fails to come, then something new must be tried,—no matter what. No weakness, no sentiment, no soft phrases—the only test of a weapon should be—Will it shoot straight to the target?—or—Will it cut true and clean? That is my religion.

VON B. Splendid!

VON D. We shall see how badly they have beaten us, eh?

VON B. The Allies talk without end about the lessons that the war and its victories have taught *them*. Do they suppose *we* are learning nothing?

VON C. Defeat ought to prove the better teacher of the two.

VON A. Give us a little time. Do the fools think we are going to yield up our great power to a pack of phrase-makers? They will see! We will show them a different democracy. Our one fundamental mistake has been our failure to realize the value of the individual. We made our soldiers into machines,—and we were beaten by armies of individuals—fighting with the spirit and with the initiative of individuals.

VON D. That is our lesson. Let us show them how eagerly we learn.

VON C. And what of this Belgian girl?

VON A. She will soon be here. I have attended to that. This report I have just received—it details everything. It is Fate—Divine guidance—or what you will. She is the instrument of a plot. She is coming with the purpose of sacrificing herself—to kill the Prince,—regarded as the head of our military power. Could anything be better for our purpose,—even if she should succeed and kill him? Does she not win for us either way?

DIALOGUE VI



DIALOGUE VI

Place. The interior of Celestine's hut.

Persons. Raoul, who sits on the floor in moody silence, and the boy of twelve and the girl of fourteen, also sitting on the floor, there being no furniture in the room.

RAOUL. Why are you here? You are not working?

THE BOY. No, we are not working.

THE GIRL. And we do not have to work.

RAOUL. How is that?

GIRL. We do not have to work to-day—that is all.

RAOUL. But why?

BOY. Oh, we don't know why. We were told we were not to go to work to-day.

RAOUL [*with quickening interest*]. That is odd. A holiday. Is it their Kaiser's birthday?

BOY. They did not say so. Would that give us a holiday?

RAOUL. Very likely. They have to be very particular about his birthdays.

BOY. I used to have birthdays before the war.

GIRL [*showing signs of tears*]. And I. It was on my birthday that we were taken away.

BOY [*supplementing her story*]. The retreat, you know. They had to leave and they took us with them. They took me because I was big and strong,—they were afraid I would enlist and fight against them when our troops came,—and so they took me. They knew I would be a good worker—and a better soldier.

RAOUL. You don't mind working?

BOY. Well,—I wouldn't mind so much only I know I am being made into a traitor. I heard one of the men say it in the field the other day. He said making us work and help against our own people was like turning us into traitors. Do *you* think so?

RAOUL. It is wrong this thing that they have done. They have no right to carry off the people of districts they are compelled to give up. But *their* crime will never make you into a traitor. You are a brave lad, Pierre,—and Marie is a brave girl. [*Reflectively.*] I still cannot understand why you were told not to go out to work?

GIRL. Where is sister Celestine? She did not go out either? Why isn't she here as we are? They told us to come back here and stay inside—not to dare to come out. The brutes——

BOY. Yes, they struck at us. I would have

defended Marie,—but—but I was the first to be knocked down.

RAOUL. It is not wise to attempt to stand against them. You only bring more misery on yourselves. I have told you before.

BOY. I know—but these old Landsturm,—why if I was only a little stronger——

GIRL. You mean if you had more to eat. [*Persisting.*] Where do you think Sister Celestine is?

RAOUL. *Sister ?* Oh, I see,—that is what you called her.

BOY. She was like a sister.

RAOUL. She was more than that to all of us.

GIRL [*knowingly*]. You love her, too,—don't you?

RAOUL. Yes,—I love her too.

GIRL. And you don't know where she is?

BOY. Has she been taken away?

RAOUL. No, not taken away.

GIRL [*detecting the evasion*]. Then she has—gone,—the fever——

BOY. She is dead? Oh,—no,—she—she can't—we need her so.

RAOUL. No, she is not dead. Listen. If you will promise never to speak of it to any one—no matter who may ask you——

GIRL. We promise.

BOY. Yes,—certainly,—we promise.

RAOUL. Then I will tell you. She has gone away on importance service, very important,—it is a great thing she has gone to do,—a great thing for all of us—and for France,—indeed, for all the world.

BOY. When did she go?

RAOUL. Very early this morning.

GIRL. Did she escape?

RAOUL. So far as we know she escaped.

BOY. I wish I could escape. How is it to be done?

RAOUL. She was assisted—away over at the other side of the camp a great noise was started—shouting and quarreling——

BOY. I didn't hear anything.

RAOUL. You were sound asleep. The guards heard it quickly enough. Most of them rushed over to stop it. They thought it was another complaint about the lack of food. Then Celestine escaped.

GIRL. But you are not really sure? What if she should be caught?

BOY. Yes,—if she should. What would they do,—*beat* her?

RAOUL. If she had been, we should have known something of it by this time.

BOY. That is true. They scare everybody with their punishments,—they always let everybody know about them. We should have

heard if she had been caught and was to be beaten.

RAOUL [*sharply*]. Don't suggest that again.

BOY. Well, they would beat her terribly you know—or hurt her in some way.

GIRL. Yes. They would make an—an example of her. I have seen it done.

RAOUL. Well, don't say anything more about it.

BOY. They might——

RAOUL [*angrily*]. Be still, I tell you!

GIRL [*tenderly*]. Did you love her so much? We didn't mean to hurt you.

RAOUL. I know you didn't, my brave ones. I am sorry I spoke so harshly,—but I do love her—as much—yes, more than all the others together love and depend on her. The picture of her punishment that you suggest——

GIRL. We are very sorry.

RAOUL. It is all right. Only I have lived among these people all my life—I know them better than you do.

BOY. *All* your life? How is that? You are quite old—and the war does not seem to have been going on more than five or six years. Is it really longer,—have we lost count?

RAOUL. No, your count is not to blame. I lived among them because I am an Alsatian.

BOY [*proudly*]. *Alsace!* Why I never knew



you were from Alsace. Why didn't you tell us? I know all about Alsace. It is to belong to France soon again. Tell us about that.

GIRL. Yes,—tell us.

RAOUL. There is nothing pleasant to tell. You were taught in your schools how Alsace and Lorraine were torn from France without the consent of their people. Of course, I was not born then. My generation in the Lost Provinces was expected to be German, but we are more French than our fathers and grandfathers, and we have been more determined to regain our freedom. Our fathers and grandfathers knew something of the horror of a German-made war,—they held back. We, who were not alive in 1870 to be taught that horror, have never dreaded it. We have been anxious for it to come—determined and anxious to be free—to belong once more to our own dear France.

BOY. And now it is coming true?

RAOUL. Now it is coming true. Yes. At a terrible price,—we have been whirled down the straits of human misery,—but the day of reckoning—the day of freedom,—it is surely coming.

GIRL. Are the people in Alsace and Lorraine glad—are they helping—do they know how we have had to suffer?

RAOUL. They know,—and they suffer, too. It can never be said that Alsace and Lorraine

have not borne their share. They have always fought on the side of liberty and have fought with France. Inscribed on the Arch of Triumph in Paris are the names of twenty-eight Alsatian Generals. It was one of these,—the Alsatian Kellermann,—who led the army of the Revolution to a victory over the Prussians and Austrians at Valmy. The Marseillaise was first sung in Strassbourg. There are thousands of men from Alsace and Lorraine fighting in your armies of France—over a hundred of them are Generals.

GIRL. It is splendid to know that they are helping us to win.

BOY. You were one of them?

RAOUL. Yes. I have tried to help a little.

BOY [*gravely offering consolation*]. If you did your best, it is all right. You couldn't help being captured.

GIRL. I wish so we knew about Celestine. When will she return?

RAOUL. I don't know.

GIRL. She *will* return, won't she? She can hardly expect to get completely away—back to our dearest France.

BOY [*stoutly*]. If I were once well away from here, I know I'd be able to get anywhere.

GIRL [*anxiously*]. You don't think she is coming back?

RAOUL. I cannot say one way or the other.

GIRL. I know. You think we shall never see her again.

BOY. But she is to do a great thing,—she will have to live so that she may be honored for it.

RAOUL. Of course.

GIRL. That is not always the way. If her work is to be dangerous——

BOY. He didn't say dangerous. He said——

RAOUL. I think we had better not discuss it. Let us wait till we hear something.

GIRL [*wisely*]. Yes, that is what we had better do.

BOY. But how shall we hear?

RAOUL. We shall hear in time.

BOY. Yes, but——

GIRL. Don't talk about it. We ought to be trying to enjoy our rest.

RAOUL. I can't understand why you are allowed this rest.

[*They are interrupted by the unceremonious entrance of a German sergeant and four soldiers.*]

(THE SERGEANT. What are you doing here?

[*The children cower back in instant alarm.*]

RAOUL. They were told to stay indoors to-day—not to go into the fields.

SERGEANT. Enough of that nonsense. I don't mean *them*,—I told 'em myself. I mean

you. What are you doing here? Did any one tell *you* to stay here indoors,—skulking——

RAOUL [*defensively*]. I have been sick—too weak to walk——

SERGEANT. Why weren't you reported sick?

RAOUL. I was reported.

SERGEANT. Come, we're only wasting time. You are Raoul Arlant——

RAOUL. *Arlant*? I admit my name is Raoul—but the other name.

SERGEANT. The other name is Arlant. You're an Alsatian,—a spy—I have here a warrant——

RAOUL. The old convenient charge, eh? An Alsatian,—he must be charged with something in order to be quickly disposed of,—call it espionage then,—say he spied on us.

SERGEANT. I don't know anything about it. I haven't time for your speech-making. You can do that before the court martial. Come on.

RAOUL [*getting painfully to his feet*]. All right. I suppose there is no need of asking the verdict of my judges?

SERGEANT. You'll know it soon enough,—as soon as they've tried you and decided it.

RAOUL [*with bold irony*]. What? No verdict till *after* I am tried! Isn't that negligent—or do they forget I am an Alsatian?

SERGEANT. Come on! [*To the boy and girl*]. Hurry up, you two!

RAOUL. You have no warrant for them.

SERGEANT. I have *orders* about them. They are to come along with you.

RAOUL. You don't mean—why they're only children.

SERGEANT. I can see 'em, can't I? I have my orders, don't I tell you?

RAOUL [*desperately*]. But it's too terrible—they're children,—they've done nothing. They were ordered,—why you said you yourself ordered them to stay in to-day—they've done nothing.

SERGEANT. I ordered 'em to stay here because I wanted to know just where I could find 'em when I was ready. Do you see?

RAOUL. But I tell you——

SERGEANT. That's enough. March! [*Two soldiers take their places beside him.*]

RAOUL. I tell you it is monstrous! My God! Haven't you had enough of this kind of horror?

SERGEANT. March! Shut up, you! [*The four soldiers look dully ashamed as Raoul cries out his challenge.*] March! [*The two at his side urge him on, and when he falters weakly, they help him roughly.*]

RAOUL. In the name of God,—are you going to take these children off to be slaughtered for no reason at all, except that they happen to be found in the same hut with me?

SERGEANT. They have lived too long in this hovel of spies,—this stewpot of treason. They have heard and learned too much from you and the others.

[The other two soldiers go over to the boy and girl, who have been whimpering softly, but who now stand bravely erect, trying to imitate Raoul's original calm and fortitude.]

SERGEANT. March!

RAOUL *[gathering his ebbing strength]*. Sergeant, I beg you,—take me—but don't harm them. They are children,—they know nothing. I swear it.

SERGEANT. You fool,—you know I can't disobey orders. We know about this hut and every one in it. Spies! You have been carefully watched. This woman that lived here with you,—this Celestine. She did not grow weaker like the others. Did you notice that? It was because she got extra rations every day. She was one of our spies *[chuckling reminiscently]*. That's a good one,—one of *our* spies,—living right here among the lot of you——

RAOUL. It's a lie!

SERGEANT. We shall see about that at the court martial. She will inform against you.

RAOUL *[pale with anger]*. A lie, I tell you.

SERGEANT. Wait and see! How should we

have known to arrest you if it had not been for her, eh? Tell me that?

[The children begin to sob.]

RAOUL. I do not need to answer you. I know her. She would not do it. The fact that you are abusing these children proves she has nothing to do with it.

SERGEANT. I have my orders. They may have helped in the treason. They are under arrest.

[The children check their sobbing, and stand silently between their captors.]

GIRL. We would have helped if we could. It is all the same.

BOY. I have wanted to help. I am not such a child——

RAOUL. Come, little comrades.

SERGEANT *[gruffly self-conscious]*. Attention! Forward—*March!*

DIALOGUE VII

DIALOGUE VII

Place. A council room.

Persons. Two German generals and another.

VON D. Here is he with a report.

VON A. Well, Gletzen?

GLETZEN. She is here, General.

VON A. And what about this Arlant,—
Raoul Arlant?

GLETZEN. He was tried by court martial—
sentenced and shot as a traitor and spy.

VON A. Indeed.

GLETZEN [*continuing bluntly*]. The two—a
boy and girl—they lived with him and the others.
They also were condemned—and—disposed of.

VON D. What?

VON A. [*also disturbed, but controlling himself*].
Do not bother us with the mere *details* of your
report, Gletzen. About this Celestine——?

GLETZEN. She escaped easily enough. They
started a row at the other side of the camp—
the guards hurried up to quiet the disturbance.
It was well carried out. I half believe she would

have escaped even if we had known nothing about it and had not helped her.

VON D. How did you know their plan so completely?

GLETZEN. Well, you see,——

VON A. [*brusquely interrupting*]. It was simple enough. He attended their secret meetings.

VON D. Splendid work!

GLETZEN. Thank you, General.

VON A. How will she present herself?

GLETZEN. They did not work that out clearly. I believe she is to come to us as the Belgian wife of a German officer who has died. Of course, they left it mostly to her. And as they didn't know that she has been one of our secret agents,—I presume her method will be different from theirs,—modified by this advantage of hers unknown to them.

VON D. She will be seeking admission to the Prince, eh?

VON A. Naturally,—she plans to try to kill him. We must see to it that she gets with him only after a certain amount of difficulty. She must not be warned by any unusual facility in reaching her goal.

VON D. [*earnestly*]. You are determined to go through with this plan of yours?

VON A. I am more than determined.

VON D. There is no other way—no possibility?

VON A. Can you suggest even one?

VON D. Several. Why not try one last terrific assault,—these bombs of disease germs——

VON A. And guarantee our own ultimate annihilation?

VON D. Well, there is something a little milder. This professor at Jena believes he could organize a plague,—a world-scurge of insects that would destroy all plant life except ours, which, of course, he will protect at the outset.

VON A. It is not practicable. He could not spread it quickly enough, protect us, or direct it in any way once it was begun. No——

VON D. Then,—the Socialists?

VON A. We have used them for all they are worth. They can get so far—and that is the end of it. Only the very worst radicals among our enemies will heed their appeals. And if it went very much farther in that direction, the whole plausible scheme would collapse.

VON D. The Kaiser has persistently announced his intended reforms—has even yielded a few trifles——

VON A. Only under extreme pressure.

VON D. Well, that makes a good beginning. Can't we continue to use the old forms——

VON A. On a new basis? Never! When the

reforms were first promised by the Imperial Government they knew well enough how matters stood. If the Government won it would remain too powerful to have to yield anything. If it lost—well, it wouldn't have the chance. There is the whole plan of this reform subterfuge.

VON D. I still think that much might be arranged—in the name of the Socialists——

VON A. Why do you cling to that? The Socialists have done something for us,—I admit it. Because of them much is forgiven. But under your plan they would become too powerful. They would forget they are Germans. We must never permit that.

VON D. Yet if——

VON A. To depend on them further will only emphasize our internal distress. I am delighted with this widespread publishing of the supposed difference between our government and our people. Nothing could be better. They show how little they really understand us. Our people helped establish the government in its greatest strength. But for the murmurings of a few small groups,—the people—the rank and file—the soldiers,—which means the public,—were proud of their government—gloating over its successive triumphs of power.

VON D. Then all the more reason why we

may be able through the Socialists to blind their eyes——

VON A. I tell you it is absurd. My plan is best. It will work out perfectly. This girl is an opportunity—with her patriotism and her plotting——

VON D. [*persistently*]. But she has served us well. I cannot see wherein we benefit by using her now in this manner——

VON A. She has outlived her usefulness,—she knows too much,—and she is known to have betrayed us. She lived in the same hut with this Raoul Arlant—a spy, an escaped prisoner, an Alsatian, a traitor,—and she did not report him. That led us to detect her. We can use her no longer, and we cannot permit her to go over to the enemy. She would have to be disposed of in any event. If the clumsy plotting of these fools at the camp has served to deliver her into our hands, why shouldn't we use her in this way? Eh, Gletzen?

GLETZEN [*with a reminiscent chuckle*]. It is certainly most convenient for us, General. And as for their plotting—it was more than clumsy. After old Phillipe,—that is, Andre Besson—was taken care of,—they became like children. All mystery and no plan!

VON D. And as I understand it, you mean to have the Prince kill her?

VON A. That is it. It will be just another case like that little—I forget her name,—the one in Luxembourg, you know? Only this time we rise up in righteous indignation——

VON D. And about time, I say.

VON A. Just so. We will rise up against his drunken, degenerate brutalities. He will find out quickly enough what he is facing—and he will give in like a whining cur. So, with his father as good as dead—— Oh, I daresay I seem brutal?

VON D. And the other sons?

VON A. Conceited, brainless fools and wasters. Eitel Freidrich, papa's favorite, is nearly as bad as this Heir of Empire. We must attend to them all,—but only one at a time!

VON D. The plan is yours.

VON A. [*sharply*]. You are not with me?

VON D. I am,—we all are. We stand together. It has been decided,—we will go through with it.

VON A. We have gone through with worse. Gletzen, have the girl in here.

[*Gletzen salutes and departs. The Generals sit in reflective silence until he returns, escorting Celestine—who is slightly flushed, but otherwise apparently composed.*]

GLETZEN. General, this lady desires to see the

Prince. [*Hypocritically.*] She regards it as most urgent and begs that you consider her application. [*Bluntly to Celestine.*] You are——

CELESTINE. I am the widow of Lieutenant-Colonel Von Erlein——

VON A. [*sardonically*]. On the contrary, you are the ex-travelling companion of the widow of Lieutenant-Colonel Von Erlein—before she became a widow. [*Referring to a paper.*] You are Celestine Garnier, a Belgian, and until recently in the service of the Wilhelmstrasse. Do you follow me?

CELESTINE. I do not understand.

VON A. You mean—you do not understand how we found you out so promptly, eh? I should think even an agent unfamiliar with the really inner workings of the Wilhelmstrasse would know enough of its thoroughness not to attempt to betray it.

CELESTINE. Betray—an *enemy*?

VON A. So? You admit it all? Well, that saves much time.

CELESTINE. Yes. I am glad to hurry it.

VON A. Hurry *it*? You think you are to be condemned for your treason?

CELESTINE. I certainly do not think you are going to make an exception of me by showing mercy. I ask none.

VON A. [*shrewdly*]. It will be a simple matter

for you to save yourself. We can understand how you felt—lodged there among your former compatriots,—and we are ready to excuse it——

CELESTINE. I will not continue my vile work of treason. I will not bargain for a thing so valueless as my life has been made by your trickery,—the Wilhelmstrasse——

VON A. I was afraid you might feel that way. However, there is another little matter. You know a certain Raoul Arlant——

CELESTINE [*startled*]. No,—yes,—yes, I know him. He has——

VON A. He is under arrest as a spy and a traitor. I beg you not to force me into a melodramatic offer. I will merely mention that his life, and the lives of the boy and girl who also lived with you and that other spy, Andre Besson—you see how well acquainted we were with your delightful, and I daresay—*intimate* relationships?

CELESTINE. Are your unspeakable insults part of my sentence?

VON A. Not at all. I was only by way of mentioning that on your acceptance of the program we have laid out for you there depends the continued existence on earth of Arlant and of the boy and girl——

CELESTINE. The children? You don't dare——

VON A. Have we ever shown any lack of hardihood in these matters?

CELESTINE. No,—you dare anything. No act is too depraved, too degraded, inhuman. . . . What is this—this *program* you have for me?

VON A. Ah, that is the proper spirit. We know you have come here intending to assassinate the Crown Prince. You are no doubt armed and prepared to do this. You will be searched later. At the same time you will be provided with a more adequate wardrobe—adequate to the demand upon it and you——

CELESTINE. What am I to do?

VON A. As you undoubtedly know, the Prince is very susceptible to the attractions of your sex,—extremely susceptible, though by no means a model of constancy. From the report I have of this plot which you came here to complete, I judge you have planned to play on this weakness of his? So you see we're not requiring you to venture anything—to meet any situation that you are not already prepared to meet?

CELESTINE. You wish me to go,—to—to ingratiate myself with the Prince?

VON A. Ingratiate? Well,—however you choose to express it. We wish you to attract the Prince's—attention. Of your many predecessors there have been few with any noticeable allotment of brain, though no doubt otherwise gifted. We

wish to have a clever woman like yourself to influence him. It will be easy for you,—and I may add that since you are going to help us rule him—thus bringing about immediate and genuine peace negotiations—you are doing an infinitely greater service to the world than merely killing him. That was an insane plan. It would have achieved nothing. Guided by us—you will achieve much. Do you agree?

CELESTINE. And if I do—you will spare Raoul—Monsieur Arlant and the boy and girl,—you will set them free?

VON A. [*without hesi'ation*]. I give you my word.

VON D. But——

VON A. [*interrupting quickly*]. I shall arrange for it as soon as you are ready to do your part.

CELESTINE [*doubtfully*]. But if you detected us so long ago why did you let it go on? Why wasn't Monsieur Arlant arrested,—or—or—treacherously murdered,—poisoned—like my father was—and Phillipe——

VON A. Please don't excite yourself. This Phillipe—Andre Besson was a dangerous spy,—he took his chance,—we had to get rid of him. In Arlant's case—well, he was weak and ill, and he was doing no actual harm. We wished your plot to mature; to have arrested him might have aroused your suspicions of our espionage at the camp.

CELESTINE. And the three of them will be freed,—you promise?

VON A. Certainly. [*Continuing rapidly.*] Now for one or two details. You will be provided with some more attractive clothes. The Prince is most particular. You know before the war he was always in trouble with his father because of the Parisian fashions flaunted in his—his households. I think we shall be able to do very well for you. That dress you are wearing does credit to the ingenuity of the poor fools who helped you,—but it is scarcely—*alluring*, shall we say? It only shows how feeble their efforts were. You could have accomplished nothing but your own detection—your death.

CELESTINE. Coming from that vile camp—it would have been a welcome result.

VON A. Our own poor people are hardly better off.

CELESTINE. We need not discuss it. The details of this proposal of yours—

VON A. Well,—the Prince fondly imagines himself sufficiently winning to conquer without the aid of his rank and position. You must flatter him by pretending to think him an ordinary officer. You will not find it so difficult *not* to recognize him. The trial and stress of the war——

VON D. The dissipations.

VON A. [*satirically*]. Yes,—*and* the dissipation,—all this has greatly altered his appearance from the photographs with which you are, of course, familiar. Now, about weapons—you might as well hand over whatever you brought.

CELESTINE. I brought nothing. At first I was to have a revolver—a little one,—they got it somehow. I don't know. But I decided to avoid any such evidence,—to find my weapon after I reached here.

VON A. You show you have judgment. Use it for *our* purposes and you will really accomplish something. And by the way,—you have no rival at present. The last has not yet been replaced. We have kept the—the place waiting for you, so to speak. The last one lost her influence—and nearly her life—by attempting to reduce his consumption of alcohol. Don't make that mistake. He is difficult—drunk or sober. . . . I guess that is all. Gletzen?

[*Gletzen bows and escorts Celestine from the room.*]

VON D. You have told the Prince nothing?

VON A. [*jubilantly*]. On the contrary, I have thoroughly prepared him. I told him we had discovered a plot against his life. That the young woman was selected to kill him would be brought here for examination. I suggested—very obscurely suggested that he conduct the examina-

tion of her,—pretend to be an ordinary staff officer, trick her, outwit her. Of course, he was flattered, delighted with the idea. He is in bad shape—and getting worse all the time. I said she was reported to be a Belgian,—that interested him,—reported, also to be very clever—and *most* attractive,—that aroused him. I ended by warning him that she was dangerous,—even suggesting guards hidden behind curtains and screens.

VON D. [*sarcastically*]. He refused that?

VON A. He did. He is thoroughly excited,—yet rather fearful of her. There is no possible chance of the affair not working out properly according to plan. I don't know what he will do, or how she will get on with him,—but he is sure to become violent finally, and then it will be our immediate duty to regard him as a brutal murderer.

VON D. It is a frightful plan. I don't envy you the brain that worked it out.

VON A. It is necessary. That is my justification. The Fatherland will soon be on its way to the top again—up,—up and out of this gulf of infinite suffering.

DIALOGUE VIII

DIALOGUE VIII

Place. The same council room.

Persons. A General and Gletzen, the spy.

VON A. You say she seemed anxious to go on with this?

GLETZEN. Yes. Apparently she cares nothing for herself. She is desperate,—and thoroughly convinced now that she is going to share in a really great service.

VON A. That is true enough.

GLETZEN. And she believes she is saving the lives and securing the freedom of Arlant and the boy and girl?

VON A. [*thoughtfully*]. I regret having had to deceive her in that. But I needed it as a lever. I knew concern for her own personal welfare would never influence her.

GLETZEN. Yes,—it was necessary.

VON A. It was. Let us not mention it again. . . . Did she look well when ready?

GLETZEN [*enthusiastically*]. Really beautiful! It is wonderful, too, after those weeks in the camp. Most of them there looked worn and old,—the

age of endless suffering,——unbearable degradation——

VON A. [*harshly*]. You have a superlative genius for dragging in the undesirable topic. Kindly oblige me by——

[*He is interrupted by the sound of a shot—
and then two more in rapid succession.*]

GLETZEN. It is done!

VON A. [*triumphantly*]. We have him. His revolver, wasn't it?

GLETZEN. I think so,—I hope so.

VON A. What does it matter about the weapon?

GLETZEN. You didn't see how charming she looked. The lovely throat so pure and white—I was afraid the beast would strangle her like the other——

VON A. I see. . . .

[*Three Generals enter suddenly.*]

VON D. Do you know? She has shot him!

VON A. *She?* She *killed* him?

VON B. Yes,—she killed him. Any one of her three shots would have finished him.

VON D. And ended your fine plan?

VON A. [*coldly*]. Not at all.

VON D. What?

VON A. [*confidently*]. It is hardly altered by this—this episode.

VON C. You believe it still possible?

VON A. Most certainly! I *know* it is still possible. How many know the Prince has been killed? Eight at the most,—and we can manage all of them. To all others who have been accustomed to seeing him, we will intimate that he has been persuaded to begin a very necessary abandonment of alcoholics,—has sought seclusion for this purpose—is resting, and all that. We will keep him alive as long as he is useful and convenient—then let him die in some manner suitable to his rank—rather than to his morals.

VON D. That sounds practicable. We would have to cover up most of it anyway.

VON A. We certainly couldn't admit he was shot by a woman he was attempting to murder in his drunken insanity?

VON C. If we must conceal some, conceal all, you think?

VON A. Just so. And meanwhile——

VON C. Meanwhile?

VON A. [*significantly*]. Yes! Gletzen,—we had better talk to her here at once.

[*Gletzen bows and departs quickly.*]

VON D. You are sending for the woman?

VON C. She is hardly more than a girl.

VON A. A dangerously clever girl.

VON D. You think she will use her knowledge of his death against us?

VON B. Use it against *us*? Absurd!

VON A. I think she will do anything to harm our cause—if she understands it.

VON D. That's not likely.

VON A. We cannot be so sure of that.

VON B. Then I think——

VON A. [*hurriedly*]. I think so, too.

VON C. But it is ridiculous to imagine she would be believed—telling such a thing as this. No one would believe it. Besides, she can easily be kept out of sight,—locked up. She could not be very dangerous then, do you think?

VON A. She would always be dangerous. And she cannot be locked up without seeing some one. She could tell that one, a jailer, let us say,—and she would convince him,—convince him, too, of the need of spreading the secret of our intentions. She is an exceptional girl,—a personality—inspired and inspiring,—spiritual, and yet worldly enough to be rational about it all.

VON C. She might cry it up and down the world—"The German Crown Prince is not really alive. I shot and killed him weeks ago!" And do you imagine she would be regarded as anything but a lunatic? The very claim of her being the instrument of his death would ruin what slight chance she might have of being believed.

VON A. She is clever enough to understand

that. I tell you she would be a menace to our project the moment we began to work publicly.

VON B. Let us wait to talk with her.

VON D. Yes, that is best. We will hear from her——

[Gletzen enters and salutes. Celestine follows him into the room, and stands before them, pale, defiant, her gown torn and stained with blood that has oozed from a gash on her right fore-arm.]

VON A. So you cheated me—you intended to carry out *their* plan all the time?

CELESTINE [*breathlessly*]. He was a drunken madman—he would have killed me—I had to defend myself. I broke away from him when he lurched into a table. His revolver was on it. He made no move to get it. . . . The beast in him wanted to crush the life out of me with his own hands. . . . I snatched up the revolver and fired. These automatics work so quickly. I only wanted to stop him, but the three shots spurted out like one——

VON D. Your first would have been enough.

CELESTINE. Well, he is dead. I am not sorry I had to do it.

VON A. [*coldly*]. You lied to me?

CELESTINE. I had no intention of deceiving you. I was willing to try your plan,—to obey

you and work with you,—to endure him—his embrace,—yield to him——

VON A. Alive he would have been useful. Now,—dead,—well, who can say?

CELESTINE. I know. It is terrible. I believed you when you said you were going to use him to end the war,—to work great good for Germany and all the world. I was anxious to help, to aid you,—even hating you as I do, as the ones who dragged me down to this,—and worse,—the ones who brought on this frightful war!

VON D. This war was inevitable, necessary. Do you set yourself up to judge God's will,—His way——

CELESTINE [*bitterly*]. May God pity you for your blasphemy. If ever we are to know a war as man-made, we ought to recognize this one.

VON A. Enough of that. There are other matters to be—*recognized*. You have murdered the Crown Prince. If we are willing to regard it as an act of self-defense——

CELESTINE. You know it was only that.

VON B. We believe we can minimize this handicap of his sudden death by not giving out to the world any account of it. We shall require, of course, that you assist in this.

CELESTINE. You mean I am not to tell?

VON B. Yes.

VON A. That is all. You are simply not to tell on yourself.

CELESTINE. And you will go on fighting,—pretending the old organization is intact, holding out to the last?

VON A. No. We are as sick of the fighting as any involved in it. We know we are beaten. We seek now to secure a just peace. We seek only to benefit Germany.

VON C. [*eagerly*]. Surely you will want to work with us. In the name of the Prince we are going to democratize this staggering, war-ridden empire.

CELESTINE. *Democratize?* A German Democracy—and from *you*? Do I seem so weak-minded as that? Am I—knowing you as I do—expected to believe you sincere——

VON B. [*angrily*]. It will be well for you to believe and be grateful that you are permitted——

VON A. [*tactfully interrupting*]. You will surely believe when we show you——

CELESTINE. I am not easily threatened,—not easily blinded to the real truth. You may swear you are telling your real intention, but I shall know all the time there is a hidden, vital purpose—terrible for common Germany, grave for all the world——

VON A. [*severely*]. Take care! You had better consider carefully.

CELESTINE. Oh, I know I am only a mite in your path. I could not halt you. Swear to me you are telling the truth, swear that I may be permitted to leave Germany forever with Raoul—Monsieur Arlant and the boy and girl,—and then I will swear not to tell the Prince is dead,—never to tell it, if you desire.

VON B. By what power do you think you may dictate to us? Your life is at our disposal—you have murdered the Prince,—our future sovereign.

CELESTINE. You don't really care if I do tell about it, then?

VON A. [*taking a revolver from the table drawer*]. Tell what you please.

CELESTINE [*scornfully*]. Do you imagine that after nearly three years of this war, I will cringe at your first manly flourish of firearms?

VON A. [*advancing toward her*]. You will not be believed——

CELESTINE. You know well enough how ready the world is to believe anything to your disadvantage in these days. Outside,—out where they hardly know of this beast of a Prince they will regard his death as an important gain toward [their final, complete triumph over you.

VON A. Then you really do think you will be believed? You wish to bargain?

CELESTINE. It is not much of a bargain I ask, is it? I am so weary of all this,—my slavery at the Wilhelmstrasse,—this fighting—you see, after all I am only too human. I want to bargain for safety and peace—and perhaps even a little happiness. A very little would seem so much nowadays. You have agreed to free Raoul and those innocent Belgian children,—surely—you—you—you——

VON A. Well?

CELESTINE [*frantically*]. So you tricked me? I see it in your eyes—so plainly now. . . . You accuse *me* of deception when all the time you were gaining my willing service by the vilest treachery. You have not freed them—you never intended to—you—you—— [*Sobbing.*] Tell me,—you haven't murdered him—like the others?

VON A. Well?

[*She stares at him as if trying to disbelieve his too evident assent in the brutal, interrogative monosyllable.*]

CELESTINE. And—the children, too? My God! You call yourselves leaders? You expect to continue in such power as this? You'll use the Prince's name? You think you can conceal his death? Yes, threaten me,—shoot me! One more murder will hardly count at all!

VON C. [*trying to interrupt*]. The girl must not be judged for what she is saying in her present state of mind.

CELESTINE. If you dare think of judging me, think also of yourselves—to *be judged*! And this last desperate chance,—do you think your secret won't get out and crush you? Do you expect to conceal it when they convict you of the other crimes? You would democratize Germany? You will soon find out how long the world will believe that!

VON A. Then we must not risk finding out how it will believe *you*.

[He raises the revolver and deliberately shoots her.]

VON D. [*aghast*]. You considered that necessary?

VON A. Of course. I would not have done it otherwise. Necessity—that is a law.

VON C. [*horrified*]. It is a ruinous law. [*Kneeling beside the girl.*] She is dead.

VON B. Martyred! Good God! Has it come to this? Must we be our own executioners?

VON D. It is a great pity. She did her best. We were only torturing her.

VON A. We couldn't have come to an agreement with her, could we? Arlant and the boy and girl are already executed.

VON C. This plan of yours—you see how it will fail? She instantly suspected us.

VON A. She knew us too well—moreover, we were too frank with her. We will know better how to deceive the rest.

VON D. It will never work out as you say—this Democracy. They would only unite and beat us again—as now.

VON A. It will succeed. This time they are united for an ideal. They never really began to conquer us till they set it up. But even with it they had to adopt our war methods to win. Now we will adopt their ideal,—their winning element. It will become our own,—our pride,—our perfection. The world is more than two thirds idealistic,—the idiots! We will rob them of their ideal, destroy their chief cry against us. Our professors will soon be proving we originated the whole democratic theory.

VON D. You make it sound plausible enough—but I feel they will never be deceived by us again.

VON A. We shall win with it. It is the only way—and how some of our dead will turn in their graves when we join this motley, smirking mob of the *free*?

VON C. And you think no others will turn?

VON A. Wait till peace is concluded. You will soon begin to see, then. By it we shall be

spared their discriminations as to shipping and commercial advantages. At the very outset, they will thus help us with our burden. And this idea of permanent peace,—their maudlin, fatuous dream, an *enforcing* of peace,—an *enforcing* of forceless international relations? Bah! And how they worship it! They will yield us much renewed advantage if we loudly join in the clamor for its adoption. Don't you see our strength? By all these Allies we are weakened—reduced from our position of the feared equal,—yet reduced to what? Among all these Allies we are reduced—to the balancing unit,—or as it used to be called, the balance of power!

VON D. They will never permit it.

VON A. They won't be able to avoid it. Britain and America are natural allies,—they are the commercial partners that would cast lots for the world's raiment. We are naturally their opponent, and by geographical need and ambition, Russia,—great, growing, potential Russia is *our* partner. With a democratic Germany as we will manage it, this partnership will soon be possible, will soon be formed—and then——

VON B. And you mean to seem uniform with them,—an equal—true to the Ideal,—a fellow democracy?

VON A. Only much stronger! We will again

profit by the mistakes of our predecessors. The German Empire was the last to be formed—and it profited,—who can say it did not, who can say it was not great through its rapidly organized and tremendous strength? We will learn richly from their experiences.

VON B. And you think this democracy you would create can be controlled as you plan it?

VON A. Yes. It is in the nature of our people—in the very grain of our public life—to be controlled. Democracies have always been too clumsy, too slow to make definite headway, ungrateful, inefficient. The public mind has too many parts, is too weak, too suspicious, decides too slowly. This can soon be corrected by us.

VON C. [*interrupting*]. We must soon have some one attend here—attend to her?

VON A. We must give her a decent burial. We owe her that much,—perhaps even more?

VON D. Our beginning is depressing enough. It discourages me. I still think we shall fail.

VON A. [*triumphantly*]. And I say to you all once again,—we shall succeed! We may even live to see it in our own day. At the least, we shall pass on knowing what we have greatly begun. You will begin to share my confidence when the peace convention starts to work out Destiny. You will begin to believe when you see how the world accepts—smacks its lips—swallows whole

our magnificent new order,—our *reformed* government,—our Teutonic Democracy——

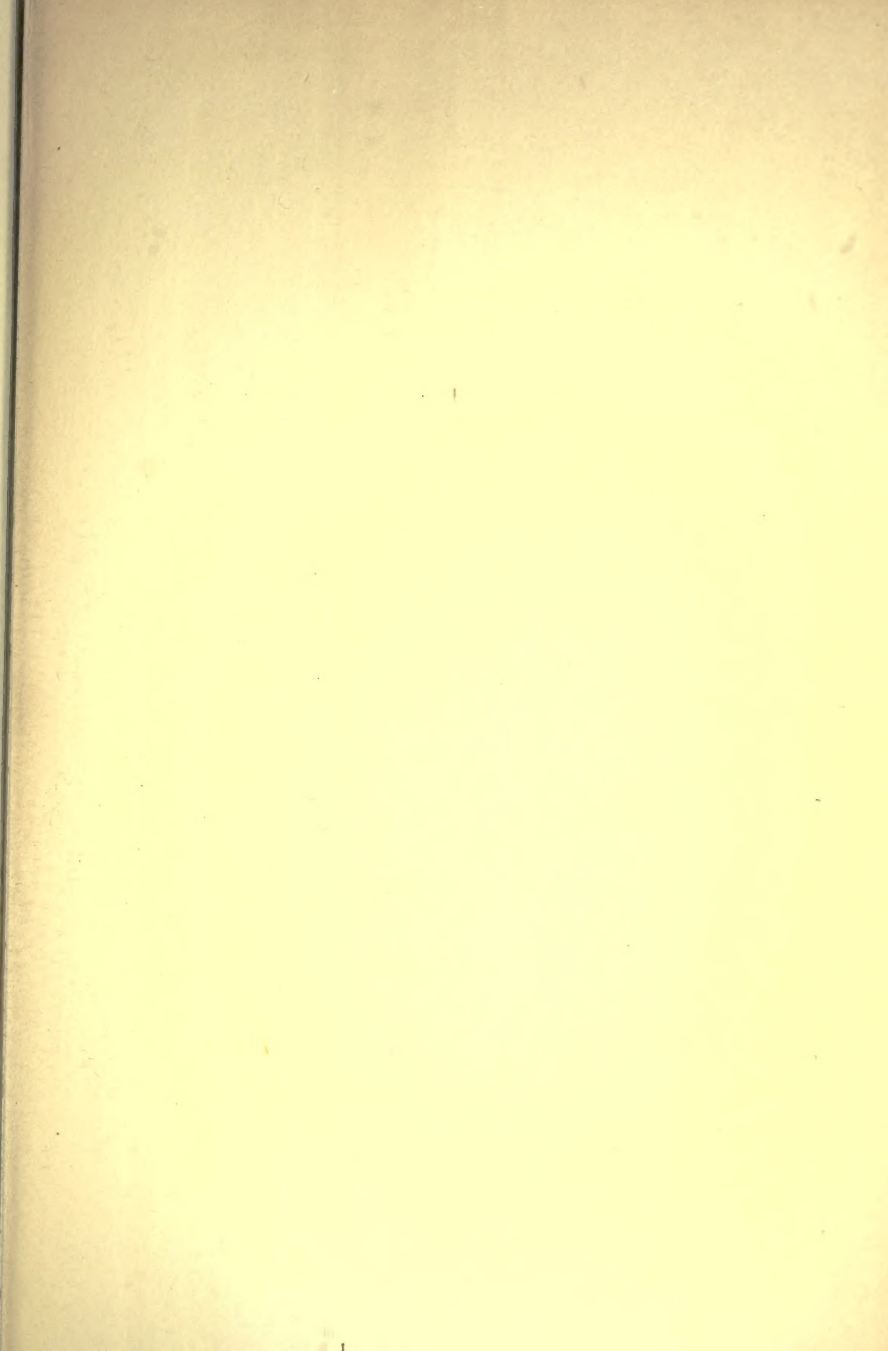
VON C. I will believe when I see something of all this.

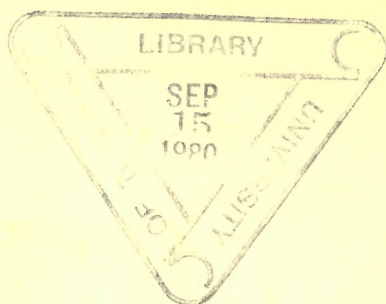
VON A. You *shall* see it all. We have misjudged everybody,—but now we have our eyes open and are gazing far out to a new headland. We are going to build a new weapon—and build it in a new name. The old was christened in the name of God. It failed. But the new will be dedicated in the name of man—that is, in man's pet names—Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—and——*Peace*. We shall forge a newer thunderbolt,—*and it will never fail!*

THE END









PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

D
526
.2
S2

Sainte Seductre

